

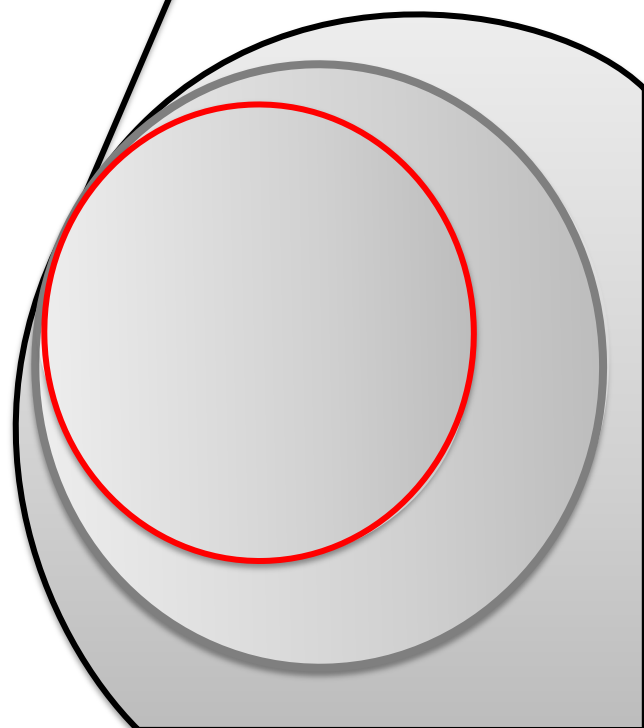
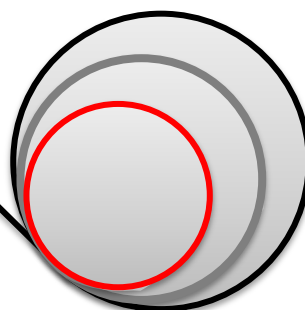
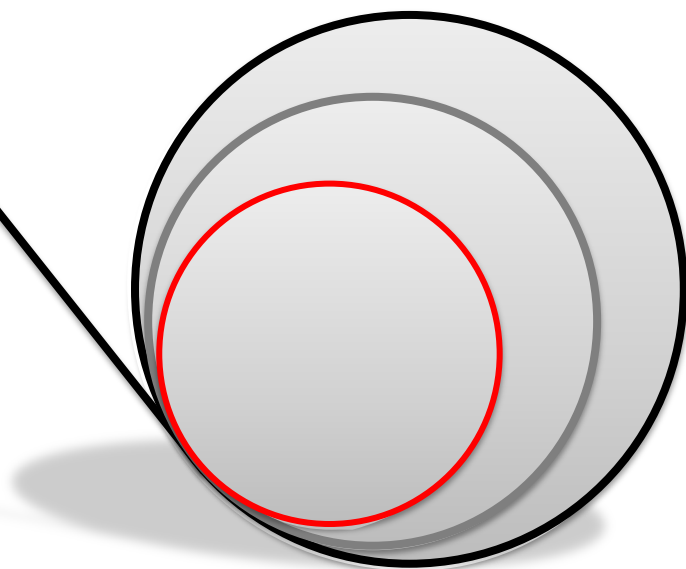
Waits River Valley School

Parent & Scholar Handbook

2026-2027



Updated 8-6-26



WRVS Home & School Compact

[Compacts are voluntary agreements between families and schools.]

Our School envisions the “highest level of success for every student.” To accomplish this, parents, teachers, and students need to work together in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. The following are agreed upon roles and responsibilities that we, as partners, will carry out to support student success in school and in life.

As a Teacher I will:

Carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Teach classes through interesting and challenging lessons that promote student achievement.
- Endeavor to motivate my students to learn.
- Have high expectations and help every child to develop a love for learning.
- Communicate regularly with families about student progress.
- Get to know my students and encourage families and students to share out-of-classroom interests, issues, or circumstances that may impact and influence student learning and success
- Provide a warm, safe, and caring learning environment.
- Participate in professional development opportunities that improve teaching and learning and support the formation of partnerships with families and the community.
- Actively participate in collaborative decision-making and consistently work with families and my school colleagues to make schools accessible and welcoming places for families, which help each student achieve the school’s high academic standards.
- Respect the school, students, staff and families.

As a Student, I will:

Carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Come to school ready to learn and work hard.
- Bring necessary materials, completed assignments and homework.
- Know and follow school and class rules.
- Communicate regularly with my parents and teachers about in-school and out-of school experiences so that they can help me to be successful in school.
- Limit my screen time and instead study or read every day after school.
- Respect the school, classmates, staff and families.

As a Parent/Guardian and/or Family Member, I will:

Carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Provide a quiet time and place for homework and monitor TV viewing
- Read to my child or encourage my child to read every day (20 minutes K-3, and 30 minutes for grades 4-8).
- Ensure that my child attends school every day, gets adequate sleep, regular medical attention and proper nutrition.
- Get to know my child’s teacher(s) and share interests, issues, and circumstances that may impact and influence my child’s ability to learn and be successful in school
- Regularly monitor my child’s progress in school.
- Participate at school in activities such as school decision making, volunteering and/or attending parent-teacher conferences.
- Communicate the importance of education and learning to my child.
- Respect the school, staff, students and families.



Any aspect of this handbook is subject to change by the WRVS administration.
Parents and students will be notified directly of any changes that occur.

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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

WRVS MISSION

At Waits River Valley School, we aspire to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive community where each student is valued and empowered. We are dedicated to excellence in education, fostering a love of learning, and promoting the holistic development of every child. Our vision is to create a vibrant learning environment that embraces diversity, encourages innovative thinking, and strengthens community bonds. We strive to prepare our students with the skills, compassion, and resilience to thrive in a rapidly changing world, while ensuring that our school serves as a welcoming hub of community engagement, collaboration, and enrichment for all.

PHILOSOPHY

We recognize that each of our students, however different, has a right to an equitable education. That education should at a minimum give the student a solid foundation of knowledge and skills in the basics, common to all educated people, including reading, writing, mathematics and the ability to think critically and creatively.

We believe that each student is a unique and impressionable individual who has emotional needs, developmental stages, and unlimited potential. Each student is a person who deserves respect, who wants to be a part of the class in a positive way, and who wants to learn. We believe that each child needs confirmation and support. Each child needs to experience success every day in order to improve and maintain self-esteem. Each child needs to be able to express his or her needs and desires and have those needs and desires listened to and addressed.

We believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here. As an educationally inclusive school, the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matters.

DESCRIPTION OF UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #36

The Unified School District #36 serves the towns of Corinth and Topsham, Vermont in Orange County. Waits River Valley School, the only school in the district, is located on Rte. 25 approximately 12 miles from Barre to the west and 10 miles from Bradford to the east. The school district is part of the Orange East Supervisory Union with offices located in the town of Bradford. The Waits River Valley School educates children in grades Pre-K to 8. Because USD #36 does not designate a high school, secondary students in the two communities may choose a high school of their choice with the exclusion of religious affiliation and non-accredited high schools.

BASIC INFORMATION

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

2027-T	Desiree Thurston	desiree.thurston@oesu.org	802-522-3597
2028-T	Stacy Emerson	stacy.emerson@oesu.org	802-439-3968
2028-C	Michael Tkac	michael.tkac@oesu.org	
2029-T	Jason Rogers	jason.rogers@oesu.org	802-439-3046
2029-C	Alexis Ruggles	alexis.ruggles@oesu.org	802-477-3272
2029-C	Tania Aebi	tania.aebi@oesu.org	802-439-6731

T=Topsham C=Corinth

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Waits River Valley School	802-439-5534
Carlotta Simonds-Perantoni, Principal	802-439-5534 WRVS
	802-431-5172 Cell
	802-479-5532 Home
Superintendent's Office	802-222-5216
Butler Transportation, Bus Contractor	603-787-6925

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

School Board meetings will be held at the Waits River Valley School on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm. The Orange East Supervisory Union Collaborative School Board meets the first Tuesday at Oxbow High School at 6:00 pm. Parents and community members are welcome to attend. Current and past agendas, meeting minutes and the Principal's reports can be found on the school's website – please visit www.wrvschool.org.

WAITS RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL STAFF

Administration	Special Services Team
Carlotta Simonds-Perantoni - Principal	Brendan Bell - Special Educator
	Jayne Jones - Special Educator
Administrative Support	Melissa Geraw – Special Educator
Lisa Thompson	Amanda McHugh - Special Educator
Kelly Smith	Aimee Harnden-McPhee – Speech/Language
PK-2 Team	Melanie Sidney - Math Interventionist
Ashley Jacobs - Prekindergarten	Anna Madan - Title One
Alecka Champion - Kindergarten	
Abigail Adams - Grade 1	Support Services
Erica Thompson - Grade 1	Carla Horniak - Nurse
Amber Charbonneau - Grade 2	Ann Schlott - Counselor
Chelsea Carter - Grade 2	
	Athletic Director
3-5 Team	Jennifer Chaffee
Kimberly McCarthy - Grade 3	
Brooke Horniak - Grade 3	Paraeducators
Abigail Tyson - Grade 3 - Literacy Interventionist	Donna Bifano
Becky Lussier - Grade 4	Nichole Fandino
McKenzie Dennis - Grade 4	Melanie Fellows
Rachel Page - Grade 5	Norma Hatch
Jennifer King – Grade 5	Amber Kilduff
	Katana Labadie
Middle School Team	Sarah Martin
Ashely Jamele - Mathematics	Amanda Osgood
Melissa Haskins - Language Arts	Brittany Plante
David Ferch - Spanish	Inger Swingforth
Deborah Rossman - Science	
Chris Putney – Social Studies	Custodial Services Team
Elizabeth Charron - Intervention Teacher	Patrick Butler – Building Operations Supervisor
	Dean Lambert
Integrated Arts Team	Leonard Evans
James Graham - Physical Education	
Thomas Chapin - Music	Food Services Team
April Simpson - Art	Crystal Coburn
Anna Peart - Library/Media	Karen Norkeveck
Ann Schlott - School Counselor	Rachel Willis

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 7:50 A.M. until 2:50 P.M. **Morning supervision begins at 7:30 a.m. in the library for those scholars who are an early drop-off; students should not arrive before that time. If you arrive with your child prior to 7:30 a.m., you must remain with your child. No child may be left on school grounds unattended or unsupervised.**

Bus drop-off and pick-up will be at the front entrance area in the circle. Once scholars depart the busses in the morning, scholars will proceed to the gym entrance for breakfast (K exception). **Please remember that the circle area is for buses, handicapped, and emergency vehicles only.**

Private vehicles will park in the parking lot on the left of the entrance drive, and follow the direction/visuals for releasing scholars at the drop off areas. Scholars (and parents) are to walk from the parking lot to the school entrance, using the designated path for such needs. **No cars are to drive up the hill to the gymnasium entrance or athletic field to drop off and/or park for sporting events unless their car has a clearly visible handicapped access plate issued by a State Motor Vehicle Department. Handicapped access during school hours is to the right of the main entrance.**

Breakfast is available from 7:50 to 8:10 every morning and will be available after these times should a scholar arrive late. Breakfast will be available for scholars if a designated "late start" is occurring.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

WRVS offers an After School Program from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., based on the school calendar of full school days. Please visit our website or call Lisa Thompson for more information. **Pre-registration is required; there are no drop-in options.**

PUBLIC ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS (Holiday & Vacation Times Excluded)

The use of the building outside of school hours must be scheduled through the facilities manager. A *Facilities Use Form* can be found on the school's website (www.wrvschool.org) under the community tab. Anyone who is granted access to the building (i.e. coaches) may only use that access for the purpose it was granted and all access must be on the facilities use calendar. Use of the gym, or building, for any purpose other than agreed upon access is not permitted. (ex. use gym for personal family access) The public is welcome to use the playground outside of school hours at their own risk. Parental supervision is required.

Video Surveillance

Video cameras are mounted throughout the hallways/gym and public entrances. Surveillance video may be monitored and/or recovered at any time.

- Cameras will be positioned in areas where it is necessary to protect school assets and provide for personal safety of individuals on school grounds and property.
- Only individuals authorized by the principal (or designee) shall have access to the security surveillance system, be permitted to operate the controls, or view video surveillance recordings.
- Parents/guardians and scholars will not have access to the security surveillance system or the subsequent recordings.
- The security surveillance system will be maintained in a secure area.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Our school is here to make sure every student who lives in our community can get a great education. We also have to make sure that all students who come to our school really live in the town (or towns) that send students here.

When a student first enrolls, we will ask for proof of residency. We may also ask for it again if you move, or if we have questions about where you live. **“Residency”** means you live in a home here. If you are staying somewhere temporarily, it still counts if you plan to make it your permanent home.

A student is a legal resident if they live with their parent(s) and the parents can show one of these:

- A tax bill
- A lease agreement
- A rent receipt
- A mortgage statement

Or, two of these:

- Voter registration
- Automobile registration
- A letter from your employer with your current home address
- Mail sent to your home address (no P.O. Boxes)
- A utility bill from the last 30 day

If a student doesn't live with both parents, we will need a copy of the court custody agreement. At least one parent must live in town and show proof of residency. If a student lives with a guardian, the guardian must show proof of residency and a copy of the court order that explains the type of guardianship, what the guardian is responsible for, and any rights the parents still have.

In the State of Vermont, Title 16 (16 V.S.A. § 1075) defines residency requirements in relation to school enrollment. As a public school, we are obligated to follow the regulations outlined in this statute, which includes ensuring that all our students meet the residency requirement. Residency means having a physical presence. In a temporary situation, with the superintendent's written permission, it also means having the intent to make the location a permanent home.

To fulfill our duty, we will 1) ask for proof of residency the first time a student is enrolled and 2) reserve the right to ask for confirmation of residence. Additionally, we request that guardians provide updated residency documentation whenever there is a change in address.

In Vermont, in the case of a minor, legal residence is where his or her parents have legal residence, except that:

- A. If the parents live apart, legal residence is where either parent resides, but if a parent with sole custody lives outside the State of Vermont, the student does not have a legal residence in Vermont;
- B. If the minor is in the custody of a legal guardian appointed by a Vermont court or a court of competent jurisdiction in another state, territory, or country, legal residence is where the guardian resides.

In the case of a student who has reached the age of majority, legal residence is where the student resides.

To prove residency, a student's legal guardian may provide one or more of the following items:

- A tax bill
- A lease agreement
- A rent receipt
- A mortgage statement

Or, two of the following:

- Voter registration
- Automobile registration
- Employment verification with current physical address
- Mail with current physical address (PO Boxes not accepted)
- Utility bill for the last 30 days

If a student isn't living with both parents, we will request a copy of the court custody agreement as proof that at least one parent is residing in our town(s). The parent living in town must prove residency. If the student is living with a guardian, the guardian must provide proof of residency. They must also provide a copy of the court order outlining the type of guardianship and the rights and responsibilities the guardian has for the student, as well as any rights or responsibilities retained by the parent. Families experiencing housing instability qualify for protections under the McKinney-Vento Act. Speak to your building administrator or contact Sabrina Brown (OESU) to learn more and see if your family qualifies.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS & DELAYS

School closings will be announced via the *Infinite Campus* automated messaging system. Please keep the office staff apprised of any changes to your contact information. School closings will also be announced over local radio and television stations and will also be posted on the school's website (www.wrvschool.org).

SERIOUS INJURIES OR ILLNESS

In the event of an injury or illness to a student during school hours, the school nurse or a designee will assess the situation and determine the extent of the injury or illness. If the nurse is not on duty or immediately available, or it is determined that emergency medical assistance is needed, the Corinth/Topsham Rescue Squad will be called for advice or assistance. Parents will be immediately contacted whenever possible, before taking any action. **Children will only be excused from regular school activity, including recess and P.E., due to illness and/or injury with a signed doctor's note signifying the length of the need.**

SPECIAL ISSUES

SMOKING - State of Vermont law expressly prohibits the use of tobacco products anywhere on school property at any time by any person, adult or child. Your compliance with this law is mandated by the Agency of Education. This includes any and all tobacco products outlined in the WRVS tobacco policy including e-cigarettes and marijuana products.

ASBESTOS - Waits River Valley School is an ASBESTOS free school.

LEAD - The water system at Waits River Valley School is LEAD free.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

ATTENDANCE

WRVS and families have essential roles to play in promoting children's positive development and academic performance. When teachers and parents work together as partners, they create important opportunities for scholars to develop social, emotional, and academic skills that transfer into all aspects of their lives.

WRVS has high expectations for consistent scholar attendance in accordance with Vermont law. Positive, life-long attendance habits begin in elementary school. The best way for parents to teach children these habits is by making sure they are *on time*, and *attend school every day unless* they are sick. To help your child understand the value of being on time – being inside the school building by 8:00 – and in school every day, remind them that they, like you, have a 'job' to do – being a scholar! And like you, they 'need' to be on time to work every day. If you are struggling with getting your child to school on time, and they have been tardy to school, reach out to WRVS and we will work with you to create a support system as a team.

A scholar's presence at school is the most important factor in their potential for future and life-long success. Scholars with excellent attendance habits have the best chance to succeed in school, attend college, and pursue their career of choice. Scholars with inconsistent or poor attendance are statistically likely to struggle academically, feel frustrated or confused during instruction, and are at greater risk of creating a mindset of poor confidence socially and academically.

If a scholar will be absent or late to school, parents are asked to please call the school (802-439-5534). When a child does not arrive at school as expected, we want to be sure he or she is safe. We will make every attempt to call home or work unless we are notified. Scholars arriving at school after 8:00 a.m. or leaving prior to 2:50 p.m. must have a parent/adult report to the office to sign the student in or out. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy.

A request to have a scholar excused from school early should be written and sent in to the office on the morning of the dismissal, and should include the time and reason for leaving. Please help us protect the instructional day by scheduling

appointments and activities outside the school day. Early release Wednesday/school vacations provide an excellent opportunity for scheduling appointments. A scholar will be released only to the parent(s) or guardian(s) on record unless the school has written permission from the parent/guardian for someone else to pick up the student.

Scholars are expected to be at school. Regular school attendance is required by law for children ages 6 to 16. Scholars who attend school are more successful at school and feel good about their learning. **A scholar who is out of school for 18 days, or who has missed 10% of school annually, cannot be evaluated by Student Services for a specific learning disability (due to "lack of access" aspects).**

When your child is absent or late, please email or call the office and give a reason: Lisa.Thompson@oesu.org, 802-439-5534.

Acceptable (excused) absences, below. Other absences will be unexcused.

- Illness* A doctor's note may be requested for illnesses lasting longer than 3 days

Expect the following when your child has the following absences:

5 absences	• A letter sent as documentation • Teacher schedules a meeting/conversation with parents (could include nurse, guidance)
10 absences This is considered truant	• Letter home and to the Superintendent of Schools, Department of Children and Families (DCF) • Meeting request with the principal and teacher • Referral to the Educational Support Team to determine the impact on education • A Truant Officer may be sent to the home
15 absences	• Letter home and to the Superintendent of Schools, Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Truancy officer. • Team meeting with Social Cognition Team, Parents and Superintendent

MAKE-UP WORK

Absent students may be responsible for making up schoolwork. Families should contact the classroom teacher to request assignments. Teachers will prepare materials for the end of the *following* school day (24 hours after the request). This is not meant for new learning or for vacations, but for students who may be out for more than 3 days with an illness.

ATTENDANCE-TARDY CONCERNS

Chronic absenteeism and tardiness are detrimental to the scholar and disruptive to the classroom. It is expected that every WRVS scholar will be at school no later than 8:00 a.m. **A student who is out of school for 18 days or who has missed 10% of school will not be evaluated by Student Services for a specific learning disability.**

As required by Title 16 Vermont Statutes Annotated (VDS) Section 1121 through 1127, Waits River Valley School has developed procedures for tardiness and attendance (truancy).

After five-day increments of absence and/or tardy the following communication/teaming procedures will occur:

- If a scholar is tardy/absent for 5 days/times: A letter of notification will be sent home with copies going to the Superintendent of Schools. Parents will be asked to schedule a meeting with the teacher and/or Nurse/Guidance Counselor.
- If a scholar is tardy/absent for 10 days/times: A letter of notification will be sent home with copies going to the Superintendent of schools and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Parents will be asked to schedule a meeting with the Teacher and the Principal.

- If a scholar is tardy /absent for 15 days/times: A letter of notification will be sent home with copies going to the Superintendent of Schools, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Truancy Officer. Parents will be asked to schedule a meeting with the Social Cognition Team.

If students are to participate in extracurricular activities, they must attend all classes on the day of the scheduled activity. Please plan appointments accordingly. When school is cancelled, all extra-curricular activities are cancelled that day as well.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

A safe and nurturing environment is the top priority for WRVS and all school sponsored activities. This is especially true with respect to a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ethnic differences, or disabilities. Under no circumstances should any scholar, staff member or volunteer be subjected to behavior and/or language aimed to demean, disrespect or harm. If behavior or hate speech of this kind is observed and/or reported a meeting with the Principal and family will be immediately scheduled. Adults and students are encouraged and expected to work together to ensure a meaningful and safe learning environment for our communities to grow and thrive together. Thank you for helping ensure the highest levels of respect and safety for all.

BUS NOTES

Pink bus notes are sent home with all students on the first day of school and can be found on the school's website under the quick links. At any time, you can call the school and request more bus notes be sent home with your child. If your child's after school plan deviates from his or her normal plan, please send your child to school that morning with a bus note. **Unless it is an emergency, please do not call the school to have the office personnel write a bus note for your child.** WRVS will use email or fax to accept a bus note, however, the email must be sent to Lisa Thompson at lisa.thompson@oesu.org AND Kelly Smith at kelly.smith@oesu.org by **1:00**. If you don't receive a response to your email, please call the school.

SCHOOL MEALS

The Waits River Valley School will continue to participate in Vermont's Universal Meal program. All students enrolled at WRVS are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at **no charge** to your household each day of the 2026-2027 school year. If a scholar brings a "home lunch", they will be asked to choose either school/packed lunch, but not consume both at any one lunch period.

Milk is included with lunch; if a student desires additional milk or brings his or her lunch from home and wants milk, there is a sixty-cent charge (subject to change). Breakfast and lunch menus will be sent home monthly and are also available at www.wrvschool.org.

The consumption of sugary drinks (i.e. soda, energy drinks, etc.) and/or caffeine-based beverages (i.e. coffee) are not allowed at school. Rather, we prefer fruit juice, water, cider or milk. Food brought into the building for individual snack opportunity will be eaten in the nurse's office eliminating cross contamination concerns. This does not apply to lunches as any food brought from home can be eaten in the café at the designated lunch time.

No food items should be sent that requires heating or reheating.

LOST AND FOUND ITEMS

Clothing and personal belongings of students should be marked with the owner's name. Each year we collect many unmarked items that are not claimed by students or parents. A lost and found box is located in the main entrance area. At the middle and end of the school year, all unclaimed clothing will be donated to charity.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS

State law requires that we facilitate crisis and/or fire drills throughout the school year. If parents or other visitors are in the building during one of these drills, they will follow the same procedures as the students.

MEDICATIONS AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES

The school nurse treats routine illnesses and accidents when on duty, including making decisions to send children home. Parents whose child is not feeling well should keep their child home. Students need to be symptom free for 24 hours (i.e. vomiting, fever) prior to returning to school. Severe cases of illness or serious accidents will be brought to the immediate attention of a parent.

It is important that parents whose children have disabilities or medical problems inform the school nurse. Prescribed and/or over the counter medication, including cough drops, cannot be given or taken at school without signed authority from a physician and the parent, including prescription details. This must be renewed on a yearly basis. All medications must be in prescription bottles, and/or non-prescription original labeled bottle. For health and safety reasons, parents should deliver medications directly to the school nurse rather than have students bring them to school.

The school nurse is responsible for keeping cumulative health records for each student. Parental cooperation is essential if school health records are to be accurate. Information about the following must be provided: immunization record, record of illnesses, injury, food allergies, or special needs, and results of vision and hearing testing.

Epi-pen procedures will be addressed on an individual basis with the medical plan team, who consists of the school nurse, administrator and the scholar's teacher.

CLASS PARTIES

Teachers, at their discretion, may plan and hold parties at special times at school. Birthday "treats" are permitted for all students. Please contact the school nurse, Carla Horniak to discuss prior to sending any treats to school. **Due to specific allergy and health needs, all treats must be preapproved 24-hours in advance by the classroom teacher or school nurse. No items that contain peanuts, tree nuts or that are processed on shared equipment will be served.**

Celebrations on a private level are an exciting opportunity to bring additional friends into your child's private time. Invitations may only be distributed at school if the entire class is invited to attend. Individual invitations must be privately delivered to the recipients outside of school.

SCHOOL PROPERTY, TEXTS AND LIBRARY BOOKS

Textbooks, library books, and other school materials are expensive. It is important that students take responsibility for these materials so that they last as long as possible. Students must return all books and issued Chromebooks in good condition or be assessed a fee toward the cost of replacement. Students will be assessed the replacement cost of all books not returned or returned in a state of determined misuse by the last day of the school year.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT/ELECTRONICS

Electronic equipment is a valuable tool in the classroom and provided by the school when needed. Students may not use personal electronic equipment in the classroom **or on the bus** or take personal photos during the school day, on the bus or at school sponsored activities. Parents and students should refer to the behavioral matrix starting on page 20 in this handbook for consequences related to the use of personal electronics during the school day or on the bus.

Once a year, WRVS staff will delete electronic files and email of scholars who are not currently attending WRVS.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Waits River Valley School does not assume responsibility for any personal property belonging to a child or adult under any circumstances. Valuable items should not be stored in lockers, backpacks, or other unsecured areas. Please assist us by not sending personal items to school (i.e. toys, toy weapons, trading cards, etc.)

SCHOOL LOCKERS

Students in grades K-8 may have a locker or cubby to store a backpack, books and materials, coats, or gym clothes. Anything stored must fit completely inside and the door must close completely. Money and other valuables should not be stored in lockers. The school cannot be responsible for loss from lockers.

The administration will be consulted prior to any lock being added. Lockers must be treated with respect and may be decorated with appropriate pictures or posters. The school administration may require the removal of inappropriate materials, and may inspect lockers upon reasonable suspicion of inappropriate activity.

USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONES

If a student has a serious problem and needs assistance, he or she should request that their teacher allow them to go to the office. At the discretion of the school office personnel, students may be permitted to make emergency phone calls on the office telephone. **Arrangements for after school activities must be made in advance, not during or after school.** No child will be called from his or her academic day to take a phone call from a parent; messages may be left with the office staff.

VISITS BY PARENTS AND OTHERS

In the spirit of providing information about activities and programs, families and community members are invited to participate in our celebrations, performances, and athletic events. Information on curriculum and programs may be found on the school website.

Families wishing to visit a classroom during the school day in which their student attends will need to make a written request of the Principal. The written request should include 1.) the explicit purpose of the visit and 2.) the time requested. The Principal will approve or deny the request. A request for an appeal of the Principal's decision can be made to the Superintendent or his or her designee.

Granted visits will be for 30-minutes or less. The privacy of students will be protected. Therefore, if granted, visitors will sign a confidentiality agreement which will include, but not be limited to, no photos, recordings, or sharing of observations or information in person or in writing, including on social media.

All visitors to the school will be required to check in at the office when they enter the school building. The Principal or his or her designee will keep a log showing the names of visitors and the date, time, and purpose of each visit.

Student guests will not be allowed, due to the inability to have the guest participate in classroom instruction and the distraction to learning.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Parents or community members who visit, volunteer or chaperone may not post pictures of any school-sponsored event that include anyone other than their child.

VOLUNTEERS

Waits River Valley School encourages volunteering in the school or with school programs in a variety of ways. There are multiple ways you can be an active participant in your school. OESU has a process that must be completed for any volunteering (including trip chaperones, volunteer coaching, classroom support, etc.). Please go to the OESU website (oesu.org) > menu > community > volunteer tracker, to complete this process. If you have completed this process previously and HAVE volunteered with us at least once per year, you are all set. Please call Lisa Thompson in the main office at 439-5534 and she can tell you if you are on the approved list.

Additionally, we have the Friends of Waits River (FOW), an amazing group that does so much for our school and our communities. They will happily welcome willing volunteers; please contact Amber Kilduff (amber.kilduff@oesu.org) for more information.

WRVS School Board policy, adopted to comply with insurance requirements, requires that volunteers transporting students in personally owned vehicles carry liability insurance in an amount of at least \$300,000 per occurrence. An insurance card must be on file with WRVS for any volunteer who will be transporting students.

ACADEMICS

HOMEWORK

We support that scholars should be allowed to rest, play, spend time with family and pursue personal interests outside of the school hours and calendar.

At Waits River Valley School, the only daily, on-going responsibility given the scholars outside of their school hours is to read. Reading is best done alone, or reading directly with a family member in the quiet of the child's home. It is a very independent and personal task, and if it is the right book, a very pleasurable one.

Math practice is done in math class. We give scholars time to learn, practice, and master new concepts under the close supervision of the teacher. Essays are written in writing class. Writing, which is one of the most challenging and comprehensive skills a scholar must learn, demands the constant monitoring and assistance of the teacher.

There will be exceptions to this; if a scholar is absent from school, the work missed may be asked to be done at home. Additionally, individual scholars may have some specific "practice" requests that are generated between teacher and parent(s). Middle School scholars will have staggered opportunity to practice concepts at home that are taught during the school day. This will allow transition-learning opportunities to prepare for High School expectations.

STUDENT CLASS PLACEMENT

Most parents/guardians desire that their child be placed with a caring and competent teacher. It is little wonder that parents/guardians often feel strongly about having a voice in the selection of their child's class placement. However, there are many things that need to be considered in order to create successful classrooms. We hope that by sharing this process, you will understand that parent/guardian input is one of the many sources used to make informed decisions regarding class placement. At WRVS, we strive to create vibrant, excellent classrooms that serve the needs of all children in ways that best meet their needs. Our goal is to provide equitable opportunities for all students in a balanced classroom environment while accommodating their academic, emotional, and social needs.

Parent/Guardian Input

On our *Student Placement Information Form* that you can find on the school's website under the Parent's tab or by contacting the office requesting a copy, we invite you to share in writing, observations regarding your child's learning style and any educational need that should be considered. **Written requests for a specific teacher will not be accepted.** Passing conversations with teachers will not be formally considered. A child's current teacher is open to hearing your concerns, however, the teacher cannot guarantee placement. **To be considered for the upcoming school year parent information on student placement should be submitted on this form no later than April 1, 2027 to the Principal.**

Current Teacher Input Regarding Student Placement: All grade level and support services go through their list of current students and provide input on student academic performance, behavior, and special learning characteristics. Teachers identify if a student is academically strong, average, or challenged by grade level curriculum. This identification is based on performance scores as well as general impressions. Teachers also identify students who may need special assistance, whether it is remediation or extension of the grade level curriculum. In addition to academic performance, teachers also make note of student behavioral skills, identifying those who are strong leaders with peers, in need of peer support, or challenged by group interactions. Teachers also consider those children who need to be separated.

Balanced Classrooms Make the Best Classrooms: When the initial information gathering tasks have been completed, your child's current grade level team of teachers, support services, and the K-8 Allied Arts Team meet to draft the upcoming year's classes. The objective is to match student learning styles to teacher strengths and areas of talent, while creating classrooms that have a balanced number of students who are strong, self-directed learners with those who need some support. It is important that students learn to work and socialize in environments of diversity. This not only prepares them for "the real world" but also allows individual talents to shine. As staff works together in developing balanced classrooms, they factor in all student information gathered from the variety of sources. **Creating balanced classrooms to focus on meeting all students' needs is our top priority.**

ENTRANCE AND ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Placement of students during the school year is based on academic achievement and needs of the student as well as the maturity of the student considering mental, physical, emotional and social growth, and existing class configuration. Students transferring into the school system will be placed at the principal's discretion. WRVS School Board policy is that children entering kindergarten must be 5 years of age on or before September 1.

TEACHER AVAILABILITY/TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE

Students are encouraged to seek out any member of the school staff for individual assistance. The teacher will inform parents of the times that he or she is available to meet. Teachers are generally available from 3:00 to 3:15. Parents who have a classroom concern regarding their child should contact the teacher directly as the first step in communication.

FIELD TRIPS/CLASS TRIPS

Field trips are a valuable extension of the classroom that can bring to life classroom learning. Field trips are often within traveling distance of the school during a single day; however, some may extend beyond regular school hours. All transporting of students on field trips is to be done by school bus if possible.

Teachers will inform parents of plans for the trip and will seek permission for a child to participate. Signed field trip permission slips do not take away the school's obligation to properly supervise and care for students. While we encourage parent involvement in field trips, the number of necessary chaperones will be at the discretion of

the classroom teacher or administration. Should the number of parents who wish to chaperone a field trip exceed the number needed, priority will be given to those who have not had the opportunity that year to chaperone a class trip. All chaperones must have completed OESU's process for any volunteering (including trip chaperones, volunteer coaching, classroom support, etc.). Please go to the OESU website (oesu.org) > menu > community > volunteer tracker, to complete this process prior to attending a school trip. In rare occasions, a student may be excluded from a field trip if the administration feels that they are a danger to themselves or the community.

SCHOOL-PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Good communication between school and home is essential to providing a high-quality education for every child. Waits River Valley School provides for a variety of ways to facilitate communication between the school and home, including the following:

Conferences - Conferences help the school learn about the needs of the child, and they help the parent understand their child's progress, including the methods and materials used in instruction. The school arranges a formal conference twice during the year in November and April. However, parents may arrange a conference at any time by calling their child's teacher.

Academic Progress – Regular communication between teachers and home will occur when an individual scholar's progress is a concern. Parents and/or teachers can/will access academic/social system interventions for individual growth goals.

Process for resolving concerns - Parents should speak first to their child's teacher if there are questions or concerns about progress, the program, or any classroom issue. If after this contact the matter cannot be resolved, a parent should go next to the Principal, then if necessary to the Superintendent of Schools, and finally the Board of School Directors.

Home-School Communication - WRVS has equal expectations for our scholars as well as his or her parent or guardian regarding communication with school staff. This expectation is that all communication will be done with the highest level of mutual respect toward constructive student-centered outcomes. In the event it becomes apparent that this cannot happen, the OESU school superintendent will be notified and a meeting with the superintendent or his/her designee will be mandatory.

E-mail - We welcome communication through email. All staff email addresses are formatted in the same way - Staff members first name.last name@oesu.org - For staff member John Doe . . . john.doe@oesu.org.

Website - We encourage you to visit the WRVS web site at www.wrvschool.org for updates on various school related activities.

Telephone - (802) 439-5534 **Fax** - (802) 439-6444

WHO TO CONTACT AT WRVS

- **Issues in the classroom, academic progress, successes and celebrations at home, what's going great and what's not, peer conflict in the classroom, and other educational-related matters. Your child's teacher is the first step. Most classroom concerns are addressed through conversation and collaboration. We're all here to help!**
- Help with friend and peer relationships, mental health concerns, resources for outside counseling, being new at WRVS, and other general social and emotional issues, concerns and successes. Help with high school scheduling, and the college and career process, **Ann Schlott**, School Counselor, ann.schlott@oesu.org
- Questions about academic progress and the school's Educational Support Team process (after talking with your child's teacher), **Kimberly McCarthy**, Educational Support Team Coordinator, kimberly.mccarthy@oesu.org
- Questions and information about transportation; bus routes, pickup and drop off procedures, applying to be a substitute bus driver (we're always looking), **Lisa Thompson**, Main Office, lisa.thompson@oesu.org

- Questions, concerns and suggestions for the school food service program, **Crystal Coburn**, Food Service Manager, crystal.coburn@oesu.org
- All things health related; injuries, illnesses, allergies, the need for health accommodations at school, and other emergency health plans, **Carla Horniak**, School Nurse, carla.horniak@oesu.org
- All things athletics related, **Jennifer Chaffee**, Athletic Director, jchaffee18@gmail.com
- All day-to-day operations, including changes to arrival or dismissal plans, facilities use reservations, getting a message to your child, updating your contact information and enrollment. *Please always call 439-5534, rather than email, for time-sensitive issues.*
 Carlotta Simonds-Perantoni, Principal, carlotta.simonds-perantoni@oesu.org
 Lisa Thompson, Administrative Assistant, lisa.thompson@oesu.org

IMPORTANT ACADEMIC NOTIFICATION DATES (approximate) ~ K-8

Marking Period	Marks Close
First	November 20
Second	March 12
Third	June 11

ACADEMIC PROGRESS CONCERNS

A goal of WRVS is for each student to progress in his or her educational program by reaching a standard of achievement necessary to progress from grade to grade. These procedures apply to grade retention in grades K-8.

RETENTION PROCESS

Retention decisions will be based on the extent to which a student is meeting the standards established by the *Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities* as well as other relevant factors, including social, emotional, physical and mental growth, past academic performance, behavior, motivation, and attendance.

1. Teacher notifies the Principal by the end of January.
2. Schedule Principal/Teacher conference (Principal may contact other staff as resources.)
3. Principal and Teacher determine the need for:
 - a. The Retention Form
 - b. EST Referral/Review
4. Meet with all EST members at appointed time. Review the teacher's evaluations and comments on the Retention Form. Discuss the child, what is being done to help him or her, and what further remediation/testing is necessary. Add additional information gathered during the meeting. Between February and April, pertinent information from the cumulative folder is to be gathered.
5. Teachers meet with each child's parents/guardians during the second trimester in late January to inform them of the possibility of retention. Principal may attend these conferences.
6. In March, schedule meeting with Teacher and Principal prior to parent-teacher conferences.
 - a. Teachers bring achievement test results of those students being considered for retention
 - b. The team decides on promotion or retention for each child.
 - c. Tentative parent conferences are scheduled.
7. Teacher attends conferences with parents/guardians. In cases of retention recommendation, parents are asked to sign a form stating they have been notified of retention and agree to it.

8. The Principal writes the summary/reasons for retention and the recommendations to the receiving teacher based on all the information collected on each child throughout the school year.

RETENTION SCHEDULE

The schedule found below will serve to direct the EST and/or the Social Cognition Team as it proceeds through remediation efforts during the second half of the school year.

BY JANUARY

Teachers inform the Principal about students who are experiencing academic/social problems and the progress of the current EST Plan.

FEBRUARY

Principal may choose to convene the Social Cognition Team (and any other staff as resource personnel.) Teacher, Principal, and Team fill in the Retention Date Form. Teacher and Principal discuss the student with his or her parents/guardians by the 15th of February.

MARCH/APRIL

Social Cognition Team and/or EST may meet to discuss progress of the student.

Teacher discusses progress of student with parents.

MAY

1. Social Cognition Team and/or EST makes recommendation with use of the Retention Guide.
2. Principal or designee writes final recommendation that is sent to the parents/guardians prior to step #4.
3. Principal and Teacher meet to discuss recommendations with parents/guardians.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Any school-sponsored activity that takes place beyond the daily normal school hours is defined as extracurricular. These include sports teams and activities such as plays, dances and field trips. When school is cancelled due to inclement weather, all after school activities scheduled for that afternoon or evening will be cancelled as well. Students must be present for all classes on the day of a scheduled activity to participate, unless excused by the administration. Please plan appointments accordingly.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle School is a different experience as scholars progress in their academic careers. In many ways it is a transitional period between elementary and high school, with some specific changes in the school day. It is important that students are able to adapt to these changes, and the Middle School team will provide assistance and support in this process.

CLASS PREPARATION IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Middle school scholars are expected to come to class prepared and ready to be involved. It is the scholar's responsibility to come to class with materials required by the instructor, including their homework, pencils, pens, notebooks, and textbook or other materials.

Scholars will not have extra credit and/or re-do opportunity to enhance their grade. Equitable opportunity is provided for all scholars and coming to classes prepared, engaged and accountable is expected at the time of learning.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PARTIES, DANCES AND ACTIVITIES

The Middle School 8th Grade class or the administration may plan dances and activities that include only Middle School students. In order for a dance or activity to be held there **MUST** be a minimum of two staff present. Once a student comes

into the building, he/she must remain in the building until the end of the event or when picked up by a parent. Students will be allowed only in the area of the event. The rest of the building is off limits. Dance and activity hours are to be concluded by 8:00 P.M. unless special permission is given by the Principal. Parents must pick students up promptly at the end of the event, or risk attendance at future events. All school rules and expectations remain in effect.

8TH GRADE CLASS TRIP

An end-of-year trip by students in the 8th Grade has become a traditional part of the Waits River Valley School experience. This year, the 8th Grade trip will be developed by the 8th Grade parents.

- All fundraising must be preapproved, by submitting the *fundraiser request form* to the Principal, before initiation.
- All funds raised must be turned in to the main office within 48-hours of the close of the fundraiser for deposit into the graduating class's account.
- An account balance can be requested at any time, with the understanding that reconciling the account after a fundraising event, may take time to complete.
- NO FUNDS may be held by a staff member, scholar, family member or community member.

GRADUATION AND LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Graduations for 8th Grade scholars will be determined after all snow days have been incurred. The last day of school for 8th Grade students is the day the graduation ceremony is held.

ATHLETIC PROCEDURE FOR WRVS - (Also see the WRVS Athletic Handbook)

With appropriate team participation numbers and volunteer coaches, WRVS will offer Fall soccer and Winter basketball programming. To ensure continued development in skills necessary for team sports, the Athletic Director provides an adequate and challenging schedule for each age group – 3/4, 5/6, 7/8 and K-2 Instructional. The master schedule should be followed and changes should not be made unless the Athletic Director is aware and approves of the changes.

A student may not be a member of more than one interscholastic team at any one time. On rare occasions there may be an exception to this rule due to low numbers, however the decision to do so will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director and the Principal. Parents of the player will be approached before a decision is made. Players cannot sit on the bench in uniform or out of uniform if they are not on the assigned team that is playing.

The WRVS Athletic Program has a Parent & Spectator Code of Conduct that each parent is required to sign and adhere to in order for their son or daughter to participate on a WRVS athletic team. Parents and other spectators are required to represent themselves in a socially acceptable way at all times. This form will be handed out at the beginning of each season and will need to be signed and returned to the WRVS Athletic Director. If an issue of poor sportsmanship, spectator behavior and/or other interaction at a school sponsored event is reported to the Athletic Director/Principal, the spectator will be asked to meet with the Athletic Committee and/or the school administration.

CONCUSSION IN SPORTS INFORMATION

- A concussion is a brain injury and all are serious.
- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death.

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. What seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can occur in any sport or recreation activity. So, all coaches, parents, and athletes need to learn concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs.

How Can I Recognize a Possible Concussion?

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

- A forceful bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head AND
- Any change in the athlete's behavior, thinking, or physical functioning.
- Athletes who experience **any** of the signs and symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion says they are symptom free and it's okay to return to play.

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
• Appears dazed or stunned • Is confused about assignment or position • Forgets an instruction • Is unsure of game, score, or opponent • Moves clumsily • Answers questions slowly • Loses consciousness (even briefly) • Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes • Can't recall events prior to hit or fall • Can't recall events after hit or fall	• Headache or "pressure" in head • Nausea or vomiting • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or blurry vision • Sensitivity to light • Sensitivity to noise • Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion – Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

SPECIAL SERVICES

GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

Our school counselor is available to provide guidance to students in a variety of areas. Our guidance counselor can provide support in encouraging students to become aware of strengths, weaknesses, needs, coping skills, conflict resolution, peer mediation, and anger management strategies. Emphasis is placed on increasing self-esteem, respect for others, and an awareness of choices and responsibilities.

Self-direction is a goal of the program. It is oriented toward the social, emotional, and cognitive developmental levels of each student and operates from a preventative as well as a remedial standpoint. Professional therapy is not a service of a school guidance program. Counseling is of a supportive nature and is not structured or meant for those in need of more extensive therapy. Significant student concerns may be referred to a mental health and/or a family service agency with the cooperation of parents.

SCHOOL-WIDE TITLE I

At WRVS, Title I is a federally funded program which provides instruction for all students. Title I teachers work side-by-side with classroom teachers to provide instruction for all students and to meet the needs of any students K-8 having difficulty with reading and/or math.

SPECIAL EDUCATION, SECTION 504, AND ACT 157

A full range of services is available to support student learning. Any student who is experiencing difficulty within the school should be referred to the Principal. This referral may be made by a staff member or by a parent. For more specifics on the process of initial referral or continuing services, please contact the school's Principal. **A student who is out of school for 18 days or who has missed 10% of school will not be evaluated by Student Services for a specific learning disability.**

Unified School District #36 endorses the premise that: “No qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity which receives benefits from Federal financial assistance.”

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Self-discipline is one key to a successful academic career and life. Students are expected to be able to work within an established system of rules that promote educational opportunities for all, respect similarities and differences among and between individuals, and maintain high standards of academic and social conduct. See school-wide discipline (below) for details.

The staff is expected to carefully monitor student behavior, to address inappropriate behaviors when needed, and to recognize students for positive behaviors each day. Each staff member is expected to work with each student in a fair and consistent manner. Classroom rules are developed with students and posted clearly as a reminder. All members of the school community are expected to contribute to the positive climate at WRVS, keeping in mind the academic and social missions of the school, and respecting the rights and responsibilities of others. Members of the school community include students, parents, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, support staff, and any other community person(s) contributing toward achieving the missions of WRVS. Teachers and staff will document inappropriate behavior on the appropriate written incident form and submit it to the principal. Appropriate consequences may be assigned to help a student correct this behavior. Serious or multiple incidents will be referred to the student’s grade level team for follow up actions. Parent/Guardians are asked to sign and return to school any incident form that is sent home.

Discipline Philosophy

At the Waits River Valley School, we believe in a positive and safe environment where the values of belonging, respect, and trust are encouraged and practiced. Parents, students, school personnel, the school board, and community members are valued partners in fostering this environment. We believe that every person in the school community is responsible for his or her actions and the consequences for both positive and negative behaviors. The goal of school discipline is to support within students the development of essential internal values and controls that help them succeed in all aspects of their lives.

School-wide and specific area rules and guidelines for behavior are clearly communicated and provide opportunities to learn and practice self-discipline, social responsibility, interpersonal skills, and respect for others. When necessary, corrective disciplinary measures will be applied to help students learn how to contribute to our school in positive ways.

Restraint and/or Seclusion

Waits River Valley School has adopted policy that addresses Restrictive Behavioral Intervention (F26). Waits River Valley School adheres to a proactive responsive classroom/PBIS approach to de-escalation and behavioral intervention. In the event of a behavioral situation that has potential for imminent harm to oneself or others, TRAINED and certificate-bearing personnel in Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI) will be paged to address the situation. (The list of certified individuals will be known to front office staff for notification of an issue/incident.) Any person who administers a restraint or seclusion procedure will report the incident to the WRVS administration as soon as possible, but no later than the end of that school day. Each use of restraint or seclusion will be documented on the formal “reporting form” (found in Lead Special Educators office, Principal’s office or Administrative Assistant to the Principal’s office) and this form will be given to the Principal. The incident will be reviewed and a parent/guardian will be given a formal Notice of Restraint/Seclusion incident letter. The incident may require a copy of the reporting form to be given to the Superintendent of the Orange East Supervisory Union.

SERIOUS/PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR CONCERNS

Depending upon the severity of a behavioral concern, a sit and reflect opportunity (either during the school day or after school), or an in-school or an out-of-school alternative educational setting or suspension may be considered for:

- The possession or use of any illegal or dangerous substance/object including but not limited to: knives, firearms or firearm facsimile, tobacco, matches, lighters, alcoholic beverages, drugs, vaping, and fireworks. Per Federal Law any student possessing firearms at school must be referred to the juvenile court system. The local school board may always exercise its discretion to suspend or expel any student possessing an illegal or dangerous substance or object. State Law requires a one-year expulsion for any student who brings a firearm to school. The School District's complete policy statement regarding the use of illegal substances is available upon request in the school office. This includes riding on the school's buses.
- Deliberately hurting another person
- Fighting
- Destruction or defacing of school or personal property
- Throwing objects that could hurt others or damage property (snowballs, pencils, rocks, rubber bands, etc.)
- Threatening to use a dangerous weapon
- Inability of student to regain self-control
- Abusive language and gestures
- Stealing
- Failure to carry out reasonable requests and directions from staff and administrators
- Harassment, hazing or bullying of others
- Cyber Bullying
- Leaving school grounds

The student's team will make a recommendation to the Principal who will determine the extent of the consequence.

THREAT WITH A WEAPON

WRVS will implement the following steps when they become aware of a verbal or written threat of harm with the use of a weapon.

WRVS will evaluate the threat by interviewing the person who made the threat and other witnesses. WRVS will consider the circumstances in which the threat was made and the student's intentions.

- Is the threat an expression of humor, rhetoric, anger, or frustration?
- Can it be confirmed that there is no intent to harm?
- Can it be resolved satisfactorily and safely?
- Does the person regret and retract the threat?
- Do they offer an explanation and/or apology that indicates there was no intent to harm anyone either now or in the future?

If so, the staff at WRVS will work with the scholar and their parents/guardians to ensure the ongoing safety of the school community and communicate all necessary and relevant information about the incident to those impacted by it. This will be approached in a way that is age appropriate for the level of the student(s) involved. See below for general guidelines regarding the appropriate incident dependent response level.

Pre-K:

- Parents/Guardians, and Teacher/Staff work collaboratively to create a classroom/playground culture that teaches positive interactions and positive social growth. Not using play weapon items, eliminating

vocalizations of weapons or imaginary play with the use of weapons will be taught and reinforced within the curriculum of the Pre-K programming.

Kindergarten:

- Parents/Guardians and Teacher/Staff communication is documented and a written Behavior Infraction Form is completed. Parents/Guardians and Teacher/Staff work collaboratively to create a classroom/playground culture that teaches positive interactions and positive social growth. Not using play weapon items, eliminating vocalizations of weapons or imaginary play with the use of weapons will be taught and reinforced within the curriculum of the Kindergarten programming.
- Individual social skill focus with the WRVS School Counselor, including options of play frustration words/actions and knowing adults are there to assist.
- Any second offense will require the Parents/Guardians meet with the Classroom Teacher and Administrator to create a reentry plan that focuses on a partnership of alternative communication options and behavioral growth expectations. Loss of social unstructured time (playground) for a day, or a period of time to work with the School Counselor and or Administrator on an individual basis may occur.

1st – 8th Grade (ALL Infractions)

- Parent/Guardian, Administrator, and Classroom Teacher communication is documented and a written Behavior Infraction Form is completed.
- In School Suspension for the remainder of that academic day and/or the following day (determined by the Administrator) will occur while the infraction is investigated.
- School transportation will not be used until the full investigation is completed; parent/guardian will be notified to organize alternative transportation if needed.
- Administrator will communicate with the Superintendent and/or the Assistant Superintendent about the threat and the investigation findings.
- Administrator will communicate with local law enforcement and/or the Department of Children and Families that the threat occurred and the findings

If the investigation finds there is NOT an apparent intent to harm:

- The Administrator and others (Classroom Teacher(s), School Counselor, Support Services, etc.) work to create a reentry plan that focuses on a partnership of alternative communication options and behavioral growth expectations. Loss of social unstructured time (playground) for a period of time, to work with the School Counselor and/or Administrator on an individual basis may occur to create agreed upon next steps for the safety and well-being of the scholar and the system as a whole, as well as ways to resolve conflict.
- **The Reentry Plan must include:** If there are any additional infractions of the same scholar making a threat, the same investigation protocol/reentry plan will occur but upon completion of the investigation, the addition of an Out of School Suspension for an amount of days determined by the Administrator will occur.
 - A list of community based mental health resources will be provide to the Parents/Guardians.

If the investigation finds there IS an apparent intent to harm:

- The scholar will be placed on Out of School Suspension until the completion of a formal threat assessment and the potential of a law enforcement investigation. Upon completion of that, **and the finding of low/no threat:**
 - The Scholar, Scholar's Parents/Guardians, Administrator, and Classroom Teacher(s) will meet and create a reentry plan which will minimally include 1:1 support for a designated amount of calendar

time, counseling, and a daily review of plan effectiveness by the Administrator, School Counselor, and Classroom Teacher.

- If the Risk Assessment and/or law enforcement investigation/assessment find there is a **medium/high risk of threat**:
 - The next steps will be taken for educational needs by the Superintendent with collaboration of the Administrator. The scholar will remain on Out of School Suspension while a next steps plan is created and implemented.

Note: A threat assessment/investigation is not a crisis response. If there is indication that violence is imminent (e.g., a person has a firearm at school or is on the way to school to attack someone or has created a known plan of harm with a weapon, etc.), a crisis response will be implemented. Immediate action of following the school's crisis response plan will occur.

SCHOOL RULES

After School Detention

- If a child is to be kept after school, it is the responsibility of parents/ guardians to provide transportation.

In-School Reflection (ISR)

- Students assigned ISR will report as soon as assigned or upon arrival in the morning, whichever is earlier.
- Students in ISR are responsible to work quietly throughout the day on academic work; either work that they owe or provided by their teacher(s).
- Students in ISR must ask for permission to go anywhere outside of the assigned space.
- Failure to follow these rules will result in additional time in ISR being assigned.

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports)

What is PBIS?

Vermont Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (VTPBIS) is a statewide effort designed to help school teams form a proactive, school-wide, systems approach to improving social and academic competence for all students. Schools in Vermont are engaged in using a formal system of positive behavioral supports in their schools. Involved schools that implement PBIS with fidelity and integrity see a dramatic decrease in the number of behavior problems experienced in their schools. Additionally, students in these schools enjoy greater levels of support and inclusion than those in comparative schools who do not use a system of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

WRVS PURPOSE STATEMENT

Waits River Valley School is a community that creates a kind and safe learning environment where we are challenged to do our best.

DEFINED BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Be Respectful...Be Responsible...Be Safe...Be A Learner

FIDGET GUIDELINES FOR SCHOLAR SUCCESS

At Waits River Valley School, we recognize that every scholar learns differently. For some scholars, fidgets can be valuable tools that support focus, self-regulation, and engagement in learning. When used appropriately, fidgets can help scholars remain attentive and successful in the classroom.

To ensure that fidgets continue to support learning while maintaining a positive and productive environment for everyone, we ask scholars, families, and staff to follow these shared guidelines.

The Purpose of Fidgets

Fidgets are learning tools—not toys. They are intended to help scholars who may benefit from additional support with:

- Focus and attention
- Self-regulation
- Managing stress or anxiety
- Sensory processing needs
- Accommodations identified through a written support plan

Our goal is to help scholars develop strategies that allow them to fully participate in learning while respecting the needs of those around them.

Guidelines for Successful Use

To help ensure that fidgets remain effective learning tools:

- An individual **Fidget Plan for School Success** will be developed with the approval of the classroom teacher.
- Only quiet, non-disruptive (as determined by the teacher) fidgets that fit comfortably in one hand may be used.
- Fidgets should be used quietly and discreetly while scholars are seated and engaged in learning.
- Scholars are expected to remain focused on classroom instruction and independent work. The fidget should support attention, not distract from it.
- Fidgets should remain with the scholar who is using them and should not be shared, traded, or passed to others during the school day.
- Fidgets may be used during appropriate learning activities such as independent reading, writing, math practice, assessments, or other teacher-approved work times.
- Fidgets should be put away during transitions, recess, physical activities, assemblies, and other times when scholars are moving throughout the classroom or school unless previously approved by the teacher.
- If a fidget begins to interfere with a scholar's learning or becomes distracting to others, the teacher may ask that it be put away until a more appropriate time.
- Teachers and staff will support scholars by modeling and teaching appropriate ways to use fidgets successfully.
- Together, we will help scholars learn to make responsible choices that contribute to a calm, respectful, and productive learning environment.

When a Fidget Isn't Helping

If a fidget is being used in a way that distracts learning—for example, by throwing it, making excessive noise, or using it as a toy—the teacher will work with the scholar to redirect its use. If needed, the fidget may be put away for a period of time, or the school team may revisit the scholar's **Fidget Plan for School Success** to identify strategies that better support the scholar's needs.

School and Personal Fidgets

The school will provide a variety of classroom fidgets that meet these guidelines and are available to support scholars during designated learning times. Any personal fidgets are not permitted at school, and the school will not be responsible for replacement if lost, stolen, or damaged.

By working together, we can ensure that fidgets remain positive tools that help scholars build independence, strengthen self-regulation skills, and experience success in the classroom.

K-8 DRESS CODE

Appropriate attire is important to the education, health, and safety of each pupil and it contributes to the educational atmosphere, sending a message that school is an important activity, which should be approached with respect. Waits River Valley School reserves the right to require that clothing and appearance are clean, safe, and non-distracting and will not interfere with the climate of learning desirable for all students. (i.e. flags – flags can be displayed for their intended purpose but are a distraction to the learning environment when worn as clothing and is not allowed at WRVS.) Courts of law have upheld the right of the school to regulate dress with this objective in mind. In addition to this general standard there are seven specific rules. Students are responsible for dressing appropriately; items of clothing inappropriate for school include those which:

1. Promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs;
2. Depict in words or graphics messages that demean, harass, exploit, or ridicule others;
3. Contain hate speech, profanity, or violence in words, graphics, obscene gestures, actions, or messages.
4. Shoes must be appropriate to the activity, and is at the discretion of the principal to determine appropriateness and safety.
5. Hats may be worn by anyone during school hours inside the school building, but individual teachers reserve the right to not have them worn during their class. Hats must be removed during flag observances.
6. Hoods are not allowed inside the school building during school hours.
7. The principal will make the final determination of the appropriateness of any piece of clothing, shoes or attire.

WRVS BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS MATRIX

	RESPECT	RESPONSIBLE	SAFE	LEARNER
Classroom	Listen to others Follow adult directions Take turns Respect personal space of others	Take care of materials Ask for help Be on time	Hands to self Controlled movements Display appropriate classroom behavior	I am interested I care Do your best Turn in assignments
Cafeteria	Use conversational voice Include others Keep hands and feet to self	Be attentive Take care of lunch space appropriately Pick up after yourself	Eat only your food Wait in line	Practice good table manners Be considerate
Hallway/ Transition/ Passing Time	Quiet voices Keep moving slowly Keep to the right when possible	Walk to destination Eyes only on artwork	Walking hands to self Stay on the right Single file	Be aware of your surroundings
Bathroom	Knock before entering	Let adult know where you are going or take pass when necessary Use facility properly Flush when finished	Wash hands when finished	Follow classroom guidelines for using the bathroom
Playground	Listen to adults Take turns Follow playground rules	Put equipment away Take care of clothing	Appropriate clothing Hands to self Use equipment safely Stay in designated area	Play fair Include everyone
Activities/ Assemblies	Pass quietly in line to the activity Respond appropriately Show good sportsmanship Give speakers undivided attention Respect personal space of others Display school spirit	Stay in assigned area Participate in a positive manner	Follow rules of passing to remain safe Stay seated when required	Participate appropriately Pay attention Demonstrate sportsmanship
Bus	Listen to driver Quiet voices Respect personal space of others Follow bus rules	Use bus equipment properly Stay in assigned seat Follow bus expectations	Follow bus rules Listen to driver Sit in assigned seat	Be considerate Be respectful Follow transportation guidelines/rules for riding the bus Pay attention Use appropriate language at all times

The WRVS administration reserves the right to bypass offense levels based on the perceived or known severity of the individual infraction and can alter any individual intervention based on the frequency and/or severity of the situation.

If a scholar exceeds three offenses in any individual behavioral category, his/her parent(s) may be required to meet with the Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee) to discuss the infractions and the implications of any further behavioral concerns in that category.

WRVS BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES MATRIX

	Expected Behavior	Warning / Reteach	Minor	Major
	- Acting cooperatively & collaboratively - Respectful of school & classroom expectations - Respectful of others - Responding appropriately when addressed	Responsible: Teacher Documentation: 1st: Teacher discretion 1+: IC Behavior Report (Staff Member) Consequence: - Teacher discretion Communication: 1st: Teacher discretion 1+: Communication with home (Teacher)	Responsible: Teacher/Guidance/SEL Team Documentation: - IC Behavior Report (Staff Member) Consequence: - Teacher assigns Communication: - Phone call home (Teacher/Guidance)	Responsible: Principal/SEL Team Documentation: - IC Behavior Report (Staff Member) Consequence: - SEL/Guidance/Administrator assigns Communication: - Phone call home (Administration)
Disruption	- Cooperative behaviors - Taking turns - Contributing appropriately - Respecting personal boundaries	- Noise making - Outside talk - Attention-seeking Bx's - Silly answers, class down, etc. - Bugging peers	Repeated pattern of disruptive behaviors	- Behavior that stops the learning in class - Defiant repetition of behavior following corrections
Defiance/ Disrespect/ Noncompliance	- Acting cooperatively - Respecting school & classroom expectations - Respectful of others - Responding appropriately	- Passive refusal to participate - Intentionally slow response to requests - Testing limits - Sarcasm, antagonizing behavior - Arguing	- Ignoring reasonable request to stop low-level disruptions - Repeated interruptions (side conversations, sounds, horsing around, etc.) - Overt refusal to participate - Misbehavior with a Substitute	- Repeated refusal - Ignoring reasonable request that leads to escalation and/or to an unsafe situation - Refusal to take a break resulting in unsafe behavior (verbal, physical, emotional)
Inappropriate Language	Language that is socially appropriate and respectful	- Offensive remarks/gestures in a casual manner - Inappropriate sexual connotations including sounds - Moaning, grunting, etc. - Putdowns to a particular subgroup - Using a non-preferred name	Repeated pattern of any inappropriate language, gestures, or connotations including sounds.	Language, gestures, or connotations used to harass, intimidate, show defiance, and/or create an unsafe climate.
Property Misuse / Property Damage	- Respect personal and school property - Using equipment appropriately - Return items to appropriate places	- Intentionally not returning items to appropriate places - Misusing classroom/school materials and equipment	- Thoughtlessly or "accidentally" damaging property - Purposely making a mess - with food (i.e. snack or lunch tray) - with materials (i.e. paper, etc.)	- Purposely damaging or defacing property - Pulling the fire alarm - Throwing food or materials
Lying / Cheating / Theft	- Be honest in words and actions - Produce authentic work	- Borrowing without asking - Gaslighting - Embellishments - Rumors (creating or spreading)	- Taking another's property (minor value) - Refusing to return a borrowed item - Repeated gaslighting, embellishments, and rumors - Lack of accountability when addressed	- Taking another's property (significant sentimental or monetary value) - Not telling the truth when it involves someone's personal safety or property damage - Substituting someone else's work for your own - Malicious use of gaslighting, embellishments, and rumors that cause harm (physical or emotional) to another
Fighting / Physical Aggression (3th - 8th)	- Respect for others' personal space - Walk away from and report possible conflicts	- Rough play - Fake fighting - Instigating - Intentional violations of personal space	- Pre-fight aggressive posturing - Repeated violations of personal space - Wrestling, bumping into others, tripping, pushing and shoving, removing a chair from under anyone, pulling hair, backpack, or clothing, etc.	- Physical contact with intent to harm - Hitting, kicking, slapping, etc. - Encouraging others to fight - Retaliating
Fighting / Physical Aggression (K - 2nd)	- Respect for others' personal space - Walk away from and report possible conflicts	- Rough play - Instigating - Violations of personal space	- Frequent Violations of personal space - Biting, Fake fighting/fake aggression, tripping, pushing and shoving, removing a chair out from under someone, pulling hair, backpack or clothing	- Pre-fight aggressive posturing - Frequent and intentional violations of personal space - Anything resulting in physical harm

Draft: Last edited 5/6/26

Harassment/ Teasing/ Taunting	• Language that honors and validates others and their values and beliefs	• Antagonizing others • Altering names with unkind intent	• "Put downs" • Threatening and/or disrespectful body language/posturing • Targeted insults	• Continued pattern of minor offenses • Continued proximity after separation • Threat/extortion • Remarks about: race, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, culture, etc. • Cyber-bullying/intimidation
Inappropriate Touch	• Respect for others' personal space • Hands to ourselves • Positive, friendly, non-intrusive ◦ High-fives and fist bumps when appropriate, brief hugs	• Any unwanted touch ◦ Poking or touching a peer, etc. ◦ Hanging on a peer. • Intrusive and disruptive ◦ Any PDA (public displays of affection) that extends beyond a brief hug.	• Repeatedly touching peers after being asked to stop • Continued unwanted touch • Horseplaying with peers • Continued intrusive and disruptive ◦ PDA (public displays of affection) that extends beyond a brief hug.	• Touching a peer in any inappropriate location • Continued horseplay that has resulted in an injury • Persistent intrusive and disruptive ◦ PDA (public displays of affection) that extends beyond a brief hug.
Refusal	• Following the group plan • Meeting classroom expectations • Communicating respectfully	• Struggling to follow the group plan • Requires minimal prompting/redirection • After a short time, or with minimal support, is able to re-engage	• Continued pattern of struggling to follow the group plan • Requires more frequent prompting/redirection that impacts the learning environment	• Complete refusal of any work or participation • Continued pattern of minor offenses • Explosive or loud • Putting self or others in an unsafe situation
Unexpected Location	• Asking permission to leave the classroom • Signing out with proper location and correct time • Straight to destination and back	• Leaving the classroom without permission or not signing out to leave the classroom • Making extra stops to see teachers • Stopping to talk to friends in the hallway	• Repeatedly leaving without permission or not signing out to leave the classroom • Repeatedly making extra stops in the hallway • Signing out for one location and going to another • Taking a prolonged amount of time outside of the classroom, traveling to and from	• Repeatedly signing out for one location and going to another • Repeatedly taking a prolonged amount of time outside of the classroom, traveling to and from • If "Safety Protocols" need to be put into place (i.e. Clear the Halls) • Repeatedly leaving the assigned location or group without permission. (i.e.: building, grounds or during field trip)
Threat to Self (Harm)	• Respect to self • Use coping strategies and ask for help • Communicate feelings safely	• Vague statements about wanting to hurt self or not be here • Expressing distress or hopelessness • Vague self-deprecating statements • Responds to adult support	• Repeated statements or behaviors suggesting self-harm • Drawing, writing, or talking about self-harm • Refusing adult support or escalating distress **Inform Administration/Nurse/Guidance Counselor/SEL	• Any credible or immediate threat to self • Self-injury or attempt • Access to harmful objects or immediate safety concern
Threat to Harm Others	• Respect to others • Use safe words and actions • Seek adult help when upset	• Angry/talk, unsafe words, or threatening gestures made in frustration • Escalating conflict that can be redirected • Responds to adult intervention to calm and rejoin	• Repeated threatening language or intimidation • Throwing objects and/or unsafe behavior toward others that can be redirected • Behavior that reasonably frightens others **Inform Administration/Nurse/Guidance Counselor/SEL	• Direct or credible threat to hurt someone • Physical attack or weapon-related behavior • Immediate danger to students or staff
Technology	• Follow the rules for language and behavior • For school use only • Use devices respectfully • Follow privacy expectations (logging out, sharing of passwords, use of others accounts)	• Misuse of school electronic devices ◦ Dropping, slamming lid, picking keys off, pounding on keys, use of non-authorized websites, interfering with others' learning, etc. ◦ Usage of others accounts ◦ Sharing passwords ◦ Not logging out after use	• Repeated misuse of electronic device in class ◦ Device can be confiscated	• Any use of personal electronic devices during school hours • Permanently damaging school devices that require repair or replacement • Device will be confiscated and loss of computer privileges • Any cyberbullying • Intentional use of others accounts ◦ Using others passwords, changing assignments, etc.

Levels	Behaviors	Staff Responses
1 (Warning/Reteach)	- Minor Disruptions - Minor Defiance - Minor Disrespect - Minor Inappropriate language - Irresponsible roughness in play - Minor property misuse/Taking things that don't belong to you	Classroom teachers: - Planned ignoring - Proximity - Signal/non-verbal cue - Direct eye-contact - Praise appropriate behavior in others - Re-direct - Re-teach - Walk - Timer outside the classroom - Tab In - Tab Out
2 (Minor)	- Continued or chronic level 1 behaviors - Leaving designated space - Inappropriate language or gestures - Physical aggression - Computer/internet misuse - Misbehavior with a substitute - Disrespect/undermining the authority of a staff member - Inappropriate display of affection	Guidance/Teacher/SEL Team - Teach alternative behavior - Restorative practices - Loss of privileges - Lunch or recess time in alternative location - After school detention (3rd-8th Grade) - Write plan for change - Tab In - Tab Out
3 (Major)	- Continued or chronic level 2 behaviors - Fighting - Major physical aggression - Major verbal aggression - Threats of harm or violence - Inappropriate sexual contact - Creating a hostile environment - Policy violations (including but not limited to): - Substance use or possession - Tobacco use or possession - Weapons possession - Hazing/Harassment /Bullying - Truancy - Assault	Principal/SEL Team - Office - After School Detention (3rd-8th Grade) - Contact parent - Parent conferences and/or re-entry meetings - Restorative practices - In-school suspension (Admin Only) - Out-of-school suspension (Admin Only) - Intensive alternative support services - Responses per State, Federal Law and local policy

GENERAL DEFINITIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

PHYSICAL AGGRESSION (Includes extracurricular activities and transportation)

Aggressive physical contact is a hostile act directed at another person that is humiliating, hurtful or demeaning. Examples:

- Pushing or shoving
- Hitting or kicking
- Spitting
- Poking or throwing objects
- Other...

PHYSICAL CONTACT (Includes extracurricular activities and transportation)

Physical contact is a non-hostile act directed at another person.

- Direct contact of hands or feet (and potentially other) to another person.
- Other...

CYBER-BULLYING

Cyber-bullying is being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or engaging in other forms of social aggression using the Internet or other digital technologies and which

- Is repeated over time,
- Is intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the student **and**
- Occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or school sponsored activity, or before or after the school day at a school sponsored activity, or
- Occurs off school grounds but is connected to a school activity or occurrence and/or carries over into the school environment.

DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY

Property destruction is any act that results in ruining the property that belongs to the school, person employed by the school, or a student-including student art/school work.

FIGHTING

Fighting is the act of two or more students engaging in a physical conflict with the intent to cause bodily harm to the other.

OBSCENITIES

Obscenities are verbal or non-verbal communication that is characterized as socially indecent and/or offensive.

OUT OF ASSIGNED AREA

Out of assigned area is defined as a student not being in the area to which they are assigned. This includes before, during and after school.

RESTORATION

Restoration is the act of restoring harm done to a relationship due to inappropriate or disrespectful behavior directed toward another person and/or group. The desire of restoration is to give individuals the opportunity to right the harm and begin to repair the relationship.

Examples:

- Apology letter
- Service to person, group or school
- Working with other students
- Mediation with assigned adult

APPROPRIATE HALLWAY BEHAVIOR INCLUDES (NOT LIMITED TO)

- Maintain appropriate social distancing
- Using an appropriate voice
- Being orderly and safe
- Being respectful and
- Staying out of others personal space

RUDE OR DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

Any verbal or non-verbal communication/display that is determined to be non-conducive to the learning environment by school personnel. This includes (but is not limited to)

- Verbal comments toward adult and/or student(s)
- Non-verbal actions toward adult and/or student(s)
- Argumentative behavior
- Confrontational behavior
- Disruptive disagreement with teacher and/or students
- Not following a direction
- Behavior that interrupts the learning of others, as determined by an adult

HARASSMENT

"Harassment" means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family members actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment of any kind is strictly prohibited in the workplace and school environment. There are many forms of harassment, some of which are outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. The WRVS School Board Policy Book, the State of Vermont Legal Notification poster located in the front office area and the Parent-Student Handbook address the procedure to follow should you feel you are being harassed or if you observe or otherwise become aware of the harassment of either an adult or student. All complaints of Harassment should be reported to the Guidance Counselor or the Principal immediately.

BULLYING

The Waits River Valley School considers bullying as a subset of harassment. Bullying is any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- is repeated over time;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- occurs during the school day, on school property, on a school bus, at a school sponsored activity, or before or after the school day, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity.

It shall be the procedure of the Waits River Valley School to consider any behavior intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate as an act of bullying on the first report and/or observation.

Bullying is a potentially dangerous and disrespectful act that will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of every Waits River employee that observes harassing or bullying behaviors to intervene and report those behaviors immediately.

REPORTING STUDENT HARASSMENT / BULLYING

- **Student reporting:** Any student who believes that s/he has been harassed under this procedure, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee. The Waits River Valley School has designated Carlotta Perantoni and Ann Schlott as staff designated to receive reports.
- **Other reporting:** Any other person who witnesses any conduct that he or she reasonably believes might constitute student harassment under this procedure, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.

DUE PROCESS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Waits River Valley School follows the rules, regulations and procedures as set forth in the Vermont Department of Education Regulations 4300 Disciplinary Action, Section 4311 Procedures, when dealing with suspensions or expulsions of a student. Waits River Valley School follows the rules, regulations and procedures as set forth in the Vermont Department of Education Regulations and Section 4312 when dealing with suspension or expulsion of a student with a disability or handicaps according to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Every member of the school community - children, parents, teachers, staff, and volunteers, has important roles to play in maintaining a safe school environment. Adults must create a warm and caring community in which children feel safe and trust the adults to act in their best interests. Children must also accept responsibility to help the adults maintain safety at school. To these ends,

- Any Waits River Valley School student who observes misconduct by another student or individual at the school (including in route to or from school or school-sponsored events) that might result in injury to a person or the destruction of personal or school property must report the misconduct to a responsible adult immediately.
- Any Waits River Valley School student who has knowledge of violations of school policies regarding drugs, alcohol, or tobacco must report this information to a responsible adult immediately.

BUS TRANSPORTATION AND BEHAVIOR

Riding the bus is a privilege extended to students at WRVS by the School Board, which may be rescinded at any time. Students are welcome to ride the buses both to and from school, and may choose to take advantage of this service either on a daily basis or as needed. For those students riding the bus, the school day is considered to begin at the bus stop or as soon as the student enters the bus and end when the bus discharges the student, except that actions or interactions between a departing student and those still on the bus are within the school's authority. **All regular school rules and expectations are in effect during a student's time on the bus. The bus driver is the final authority on the bus, and is charged with making all decisions regarding safety during active**

transportation. Students are responsible to conduct themselves safely and respectfully, and to obey requests from the driver and/or monitor immediately.

Failure to follow the rules of conduct established for the school in general or the bus specifically will result in disciplinary action against the student committing the violation. Students in violation of behavioral guidelines on the bus are subject to the WRVS School Wide Disciplinary Plan, as well as to specific bus-related consequences, which may jeopardize their continued ability to ride the bus.

School bus delays may occur due to circumstances beyond our control during the morning or afternoon routes. Notification will only be provided for anything over a 20-minute delay. Please refrain from contacting WRVS unless the 20-minutes has been exceeded. Because we have two traditional levels (elementary and middle) within the school, we treat older and younger students with the same principles but not necessarily identical procedures. We expect to involve parents in maintaining appropriate behavior in all aspects of the school, and to handle all disciplinary matters in a fair and consistent manner. The following rules of behavior will apply to all students, but infractions may be treated somewhat differently depending on the age of the student.

- The bus routes are designed to provide for the safe operation of the buses on roads rated as Class Three or better, which are properly maintained and have ample room to turn around.
- If road conditions are such that buses cannot reach the usual pick-up point, it becomes the parent/guardian's responsibility to transport the student themselves. If school is to be closed or delayed because of road conditions, parent/guardians will be notified via email and text by Infinite Campus Messenger.
- The driver on each bus is responsible for discipline and safety of his or her passengers. If a student is a discipline problem the driver is to report the problem to the building Principal. The Principal may contact the parent/guardian and the child may be denied the right to ride temporarily or permanently, based on the decision of the administration. The safety of all students is most important.

Please review the bus rules with your child. Reinforcement and support from parents will help the school district provide safe, disciplined bus travel.

Bus Rules

- Students will follow the directions of the bus driver. This includes substitute drivers.
- Students will remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Students will ride in assigned seats.
- Students will ride their prescribed bus route unless prior written notice is provided to the school office.
- Eating, drinking, and chewing gum will not be permitted on the bus.
- **No electronics visible or in use.**
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner while waiting at bus stops, as well as while riding the bus. Yelling, loud talk, and abusive language will not be permitted. Our motto is "A quiet bus is a safe bus."
- Students will behave in an orderly manner for pick-up and discharge. **Reminder:** Students should be at their bus stop five to ten minutes before their scheduled pick up.
- Students will not put any objects out the bus windows (including arms, legs, and feet) and carry-on items must be kept out of the aisles.
- Each student will notify the bus driver of an injury sustained while on the bus route.
- Any student who repeatedly breaks the bus rules may be denied the privilege to ride.
- The school bus operator shall not transport any animals, firearms, explosives, or anything of a dangerous nature.

Bus Cameras

Video/Audio cameras are mounted on the front of each bus to monitor student behavior. Due to confidentiality issues, only authorized school and bus company personnel may view these videotapes. The following procedure shall be used regarding these cameras:

1. All footage will be considered confidential and is to be viewed as needed by the administration to serve as an aid in determining inappropriate behavior.
2. Tapes not necessary for ensuring appropriate discipline will be recycled within ten (10) days.
3. The driver is responsible for maintaining control of the bus and will continue to intervene any time a student's behavior threatens his or her safety and/or the safety of other students.

Violation of any of the above, or any other actions deemed inappropriate or dangerous, will be reported to the school administration for disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Actions

In general, students who have violated the bus rules are subject to immediate disciplinary actions at the discretion of the school administration, as well as being referred to the WRVS behavior system for further action. When a violation occurs, the driver will complete a "Bus Misconduct Report" and the student will be immediately referred to the office for action. All transportation behavior infractions will have a parent contacted and a plan for future success will be discussed/developed. The school administration has the right, at any point, to suspend bus privileges of individuals for short or long-term periods of time. All consequences will be determined and implemented by the WRVS administration.

NOTE: In the case of extreme circumstances or behaviors (as determined by the school administration) consequences may be moved to a higher level immediately. Bus privileges may be contingent on in-school behaviors.

Continued Violations

If a student is not able to meet the behavioral expectations established for the buses at WRVS and has continued violations of the rules, the student may lose the privilege of riding the bus for the remainder of the year or permanently. To prevent this from occurring, bus behavior plans may be established for individual students as needed by the student's educational team. The student and parent(s) will be invited to participate in the creation of such a plan.

Parent/Guardian Bus Stop Procedure

A parent of a child in grades Pre-K (4 years old) through 3rd, or the parent's designee, must be at the bus stop at the time of drop-off or the driver will bring the child back to the school at the end of the bus route. With written permission, children in grades Pre-K (4 years old) through 3rd grade may be released from the bus with an older sibling or designee.

PROTECTION OF RIGHTS AND PRIVACY OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS

(Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

STUDENT RECORDS

Waits River Valley School maintains student records relative to academic performance, attendance, health information, academic test performance, discipline, special education matters and psychological assessments. These records are maintained in the school building in accordance with all the provisions of the "Family Education Rights and Privacy Act" (Buckley Amendment) and are under the supervision of the school principal.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the School principal [or appropriate official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education.

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

- Protected information surveys of students;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Waits River Valley School/Union School District #36 will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

Waits River Valley School/Union School District #36 will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Waits River Valley School/Union School District #36 will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey.

Waits River Valley School/Union School District #36 will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Unified School District #36 will not discriminate on the basis of sex in all matters related to the operation of and the programs offered by the public school in Corinth/Topsham, Vermont, pursuant to Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments.

Pursuant to Section 86.8 of the rules and regulations governing the implementation of Title IX, the following employee is designated the responsible person for administering Title IX:

Carlotta Simonds-Perantoni, Principal
Waits River Valley School
East Corinth, VT 05040
439-5534

Unified School District #36 will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Regulation of the Department of H.E.W. issued pursuant to that Title, to that end that, in accordance with Title VI of the Act and Regulations, no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program of activity for which the applicant receives Federal Financial Assistance from the Department.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The Unified School District #36, Waits River Valley School, fully supports the rights of students to an education in an environment free from corporal punishment. To that end:

- **Corporal punishment is not permitted** by any employee of the Unified School District #36 (Waits River Valley School) or any person employed by contractors or service providers working under the direction of Waits River Valley School.
- Consistent with Vermont Statute, corporal punishment is defined as “the infliction of physical pain upon the body of a pupil as a disciplinary measure.”
- Parents, children, and school employees must report instances of corporal punishment immediately to the principal or associate principal.

APPENDIX A - WEAPONS POLICY

WRVS intends to comply with all applicable Federal and State laws regarding weapons possession in the school. Under no conditions is it appropriate for students to bring weapons (as defined in revised WRVS School Board Weapons policy, file code EBAB) to school. Any student found to be in possession of a weapon may be subject to expulsion and referral to an appropriate law enforcement agency immediately. A complete text of this policy is available by contacting the school administration.

APPENDIX B - ALCOHOL, DRUG, AND TOBACCO EDUCATION POLICY

WRVS recognizes the need for all persons to be mentally and physically fit in order to derive maximum benefit from their time in school, and also recognizes the harmful effects of the abuse of chemicals on the emotional and academic growth of children. WRVS, in cooperation with parents, physical and mental health providers, and state and local human services and law enforcement agencies, will provide a comprehensive curriculum intended to give students the best possible opportunity to develop their maximum potential free from the effects of chemical abuse. A complete text of this policy is available by contacting the school administration.

APPENDIX C - POLICY ON PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT, HAZING AND BULLYING OF STUDENTS

I. Statement of Policy

The Waits River Valley School District¹ (hereinafter “District”) is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

¹ Throughout this model policy and the related procedures, “District” shall apply to Independent Schools and should be substituted as appropriate. References to the Superintendent shall equate to “Head of School” or “Headmaster” as appropriate, with regard to Independent Schools. Where language suggests a “District” will take action, it shall be the Superintendent, the Head of School, the Headmaster or his/her designee.

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

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

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

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

II. Implementation

The superintendent or his/her designee shall:

1. Adopt a procedure directing staff, parents and guardians how to report violations of this policy and file complaints under this policy. (See Model Procedures on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students)
2. Annually, select two or more designated employees to receive complaints of hazing, bullying and/or harassment at each school campus and publicize their availability in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.
3. Designate an Equity Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by federal law regarding discrimination. This role may be also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.
4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated, the District shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

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

III. Constitutionally Protected Speech

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

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

- A. **"Bullying"** means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:
 - a. Is repeated over time;
 - b. Is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
 - c. (i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity; or

(ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's right to access educational programs.

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

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

- (1) Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations when one or both of the following occur:
 - (i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status, or progress; or
 - (ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

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

- (2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.
 - (3) Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.
- H. **"Hazing"** means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and

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

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

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

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

- (A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
- (B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
- (C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

- I. **“Notice”** means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the hazing, harassment or bullying, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment or bullying through other means, for example, if information about hazing, harassment or bullying is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school’s response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged harassment; and whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may occur when an employee of the district, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment or bullying.
- J. **“Organization”** means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.
- K. **“Pledging”** means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
- L. **“Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment, hazing or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.
- M. **“School administrator”** means a superintendent, principal or his/her designee assistant principal//technical center director or his/her designee and/or the District’s Equity Coordinator.
- N. **“Student Conduct Form”** is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

Designated Employees:

The following employees of the Waits River Valley School have been designated by the District to receive complaints of bullying and/or harassment pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A. § 570a(a)(7) and 16 V.S.A. §570c(7) and under federal anti-discrimination laws;

Name: Carlotta Simonds-Perantoni

Title: Principal

Contact Information: 6 Waits River Valley School Road, E. Corinth, VT 05040

Name: Ann Schlott

Title: Guidance Counselor

Contact Information: 6 Waits River Valley School Road, E. Corinth, VT 05040

APPENDIX D – MODEL PROCEDURES ON THE PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT, HAZING AND BULLYING OF STUDENTS

I. Reporting Complaints of Hazing, Harassment and/or Bullying

- A. Student Reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been hazed, harassed and/or bullied under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.
- B. School employee reporting: Any school employee who **witnesses conduct** that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee and immediately complete a Student Conduct Form.
- Any school employee **who overhears or directly receives information** about conduct that might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying shall immediately report the information to a designated employee and immediately complete a Student Conduct Form. If one of the designated employees is a person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the incident shall be immediately reported to the other designated employee or the school administrator.
- C. Other reporting: Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.
- D. Documentation of the report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in a Student Conduct Form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses. Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will have the right to present witnesses and other evidence in support of their position.
- E. False complaint: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding hazing, harassment and/or bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of hazing, harassment and/or bullying when the person has a good faith belief that hazing, harassment and/or bullying occurred or is occurring.
- F. Rights to Alternative Complaint Process: In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education 8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
617-289-0111 (voice)
877-521-2172 (tdd)
617-289-0150 (fax)
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

II. Responding to Notice of Possible Policy Violation(s)

- A. Upon **notice of information** that hazing, harassment and/or bullying may have occurred the designated employee shall:
- Promptly reduce any oral information to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the conduct, and the identity of the participants and complainant.
 - Promptly inform the school administrator(s) of the information;
 - If in the judgment of the school administrator, the information alleges conduct which may constitute harassment, hazing or bullying, the school administrator shall, as soon as reasonably possible, provide a copy of the policy on hazing, harassment and bullying and these procedures to the complainant and accused individual, or if either is a minor, cause a copy to be provided or delivered to their respective parent or guardian.

- B. Upon **initiation of an investigation**, the designated employee shall:
- i. Notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor inform their respective parent or guardian) that:
 1. an investigation has been initiated;
 2. retaliation is prohibited;
 3. all parties have certain confidentiality rights; and
 4. they will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation.
- C. All notifications shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. Pursuant to 34 CFR Part 99.30, a school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the accused student, or the accused eligible student (if 18 or older, the accused student has the ability to consent), in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that an act(s) of harassment, hazing, and/or bullying, or other misconduct occurred. The parent/guardian or eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records.

III. Investigating Hazing, Harassment and/or Bullying Complaints

- A. Initiation of Investigation - Timing. Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families ("DCF") or the police, the school administrator shall, no later than one school day after Notice to a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations, which the school administrator reasonably believes may constitute harassment, hazing or bullying.
- B. Investigator Assignment. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.
- C. Interim Measures. It may be appropriate for the school to take interim measures during the investigation of a complaint. For instance, if a student alleges that he or she has been sexually assaulted by another student, the school may decide to place the students immediately in separate classes and/or transportation pending the results of the school's investigation. Similarly, if the alleged harasser is a teacher, allowing the student to transfer to a different class may be appropriate. In all cases, the school will make every effort to prevent disclosure of the names of all parties involved – the complainant, the witnesses, and the accused -- except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation. In all cases where physical harm has resulted and/or where the targeted student is known to be expressing suicidal ideation, or experiencing serious emotional harm, a safety plan will be put in place. Safety plans must also be considered in cases where the targeted student is known to have difficulty accessing the educational programs at the school as a result of the inappropriate behavior. No contact orders, or their enforcement, may also be appropriate interim measures.
- D. Due Process. The United States Constitution guarantees due process to students and District employees who are accused of certain types of infractions, including but not limited to sexual harassment under Federal Title IX. The rights established under Title IX must be interpreted consistent with any federally guaranteed due process rights involved in a complaint proceeding, including but not limited to the ability of the complainant and the accused to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The District will ensure that steps to accord due process rights do not restrict or unnecessarily delay the protections provided by Title IX to the complainant.
- E. Standard Used to Assess Conduct. In determining whether the conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the investigator shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The complainant and accused will be provided the opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The school will also consider the impact of relevant off-campus conduct on the school environment where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs. Whether a particular action constitutes a violation of this policy requires determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

- F. Completion of Investigation – Timing. No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator.
- G. Investigation Report. The investigator shall prepare a written report to include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes hazing, harassment and/or bullying. The report, when referencing student conduct, is a student record and therefore confidential. It will be made available to investigators in the context of a review conducted by either Vermont AOE, or investigations of harassment conducted by the Vermont Human Rights Commission or U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights.
- H. Notice to Students/Parents/Guardians. Within five school days of the conclusion of the investigation, the designated employee shall:
- I. Notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor inform their respective parent or guardian) that:
 - a. the investigation has been completed;
 - b. whether or not the investigation concluded that a policy violation occurred (and which policy term was violated, i.e. harassment, hazing and/or bullying);
 - c. that federal privacy law prevents disclosure of any discipline imposed as a result of the investigation unless the parent/guardian of the accused student and/or the accused eligible student consents to such disclosure, pursuant to 34 CFR Part 99.30, as set forth in Section II, Part C, above.
- J. Notify the Complainant Student - or if a minor, their parent(s) or guardian - in writing of their rights to:
 - a. an internal review by the school of its initial determination as a result of its investigation as to whether harassment occurred;
 - b. request an Independent Review of the school's "final" determination as to whether harassment occurred within thirty (30) days of the final determination or although a "final" determination was made that harassment indeed occurred the school's response to that harassment was inadequate to correct the problem; and that the review will be conducted by an investigator to be selected by the superintendent from a list developed by the Agency of Education;
 - c. file complaints of harassment with either the Vermont Human Rights Commission and/or the federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.
- K. Notify the Accused Student – or if a minor, their parent(s) or guardian - in writing of their right to appeal as set forth in Section V of these procedures.
- L. Violations of Other Policies. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies or codes of conduct.

IV. Responding to Substantiated Claims

- A. Scope of Response. After a final determination that an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying has been committed, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying and prevent any recurrence of harassment, hazing and/or bullying, and remedy its effects on the victim(s). In so doing, the following should be considered:
 - (i) Potential Remedial Actions. Remedial action may include but not be limited to an age appropriate warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee. A series of escalating consequences may be necessary if the initial steps are ineffective in stopping the hazing, harassment and/or bullying. To prevent recurrences counseling for the offender may be appropriate to ensure that he or she understands what constitutes hazing/harassment and/or bullying and the effects it can have. Depending on how widespread the hazing/harassment/bullying was and whether there have been any prior incidents, the school may need to provide training for the larger school community to ensure that students, parents and teachers can recognize hazing/harassment/bullying if it recurs and know how to respond.

(ii) School Access/Environment Considerations. The District will also take efforts to support victims' access to the District's programs, services and activities and consider and implement school-wide remedies, where appropriate. Accordingly, steps will be taken to eliminate any hostile and/or threatening environment that has been created. For example, if a female student has been subjected to harassment/bullying by a group of other students in a class, the school may need to deliver special training or other interventions for that class to repair the educational environment. If the school offers the student the option of withdrawing from a class in which a hostile environment/bullying occurred, the District will assist the student in making program or schedule changes and ensure that none of the changes adversely affect the student's academic record. Other measures may include, if appropriate, directing a bully/harasser to apologize to the affected student. If a hostile environment has affected the entire school or campus, an effective response may need to include dissemination of information, the issuance of new policy statements or other steps that are designed to clearly communicate the message that the school does not tolerate harassment and/or bullying and will be responsive to any student who reports that conduct.

(iii) Hazing Case Considerations. Appropriate penalties or sanctions or both for organizations that or individuals who engage in hazing and revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the institution's purview if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes, or condones hazing.

(iv) Other Remedies: Other remedies may include providing counseling to the victim(s) and/or the perpetrator(s), and additional safety planning measures for the victim(s).

- B. Retaliation Prevention. It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. A person may violate this anti-retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of harassment is substantiated.

The District will take reasonable steps to prevent any retaliation against the student who made the complaint (or was the subject of the harassment), against the person who filed a complaint on behalf of a student, or against those who provided information as witnesses. At a minimum, this includes making sure that the students and their parents, and those witnesses involved in the school's investigation, know how to report any subsequent problems and making follow-up inquiries to see if there have been any new incidents or any retaliation.

- C. Alternative Dispute Resolution. At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. Certain considerations should be made before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods, including, but not limited to:
- (1) the nature of the accusations (for example, face-to-face mediation is not appropriate for sexual violence cases),
 - (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual,
 - (3) the agreement of the complainant, and
 - (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship and relative power differential between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual.

V. Post Investigative Reviews

Rights of Complainants

- A. Internal Review of Initial Harassment Determinations By Complainant.

A complainant or parent of a complainant may request internal review by the District of a designee's initial determination (following investigation) that harassment has not occurred via written request submitted to the District superintendent. All levels of internal review of the investigator's initial determination, and the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the District, be completed within 30 calendar days after review is requested.

- B. Independent Reviews of Final Harassment Determinations By Complainant.

A complainant may request an independent review within thirty (30) days of a final determination if s/he: (1) is dissatisfied with the final determination as to whether harassment occurred, or (2) believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem.

The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the superintendent of schools within thirty (30) days of a final determination. Upon such request, the superintendent shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 570a.(b)(1) and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation.

Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: (1) as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and (2) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Secretary of Education.

The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the District. The District may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

- C. Rights to Alternative Harassment Complaint Process. In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
617-289-0111 (voice)
877-521-2172 (tdd)
617-289-0150 (fax)
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Rights of Accused Students

A. Appeal. Any person determined to have engaged in an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying may appeal the determination and/or any related disciplinary action(s) taken, directly to the school board of the school district. The school board shall conduct a review on the record. The standard of review by the school board shall be whether the finding that an act(s) of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying has been committed constitutes an abuse of discretion by the school level fact finder. Appeals should be made to the school board within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the determination that an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying has occurred and/or any announced discipline. The school board shall set the matter for a review hearing at the next scheduled school board meeting to the extent practicable, but not later than 30 days from receipt of the appeal filing.

B. Accused Student/Appellant Access to Investigative Reports/Findings. The school district shall make available upon request of the Accused Student/Appellant, any relevant information, documents, materials, etc. related to the investigation and related finding on appeal that can be redacted and de-identified in compliance with the requirements set forth at 34 CFR Part 99. For those documents that cannot be provided due to the requirements set forth at 34 CFR Part 99, when an Accused Student/Appellant seeks a review on the record before the school board of the school district, a school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the targeted student, or the accused eligible targeted student (if 18 or older, the targeted student has the ability to consent), in order to inform the accused student of the findings which gave rise to the school's determination that an act(s) of harassment, hazing, and/or bullying occurred. The parent/guardian or eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records.

VI. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- A. Privacy Concerns. The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the District's obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.

- i. Concerns Related to Harassment Complaints. The scope of appropriate response to a harassment complaint may depend upon whether a student or parent of a minor student reporting the harassment asks that the student's name not be disclosed to the harasser or that nothing be done about the alleged harassment. In all cases, school officials will discuss confidentiality standards and concerns with the complainant initially. The school will inform the student that a confidentiality request may limit the school's ability to respond. The school will remind the student that both federal Title IX and Vermont Title 9 prevent retaliation and that if he or she is afraid of reprisals from the alleged harasser, the school will take steps to prevent retaliation and will take strong action if retaliation occurs. If the student continues to ask that his or her name not be revealed, the school should take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the student's request as long as doing so does not prevent the school from responding effectively to the harassment and preventing harassment of other students.

The school will evaluate the confidentiality request in the context of its responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. The factors the school might consider in this regard include the seriousness of the alleged harassment, the age of the student harassed, whether there have been other complaints or reports of harassment against the alleged harasser, and the rights of the accused individual to receive information about the accuser and the allegations if a formal proceeding with sanctions may result. If information about the incident is contained in an "education record" of the student alleging the harassment, as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, the school will consider whether FERPA prohibits it from disclosing information without the student's consent.

- B. Document Maintenance. The Superintendent or school administrator shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the District in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records created in conformance with this model policy and model procedures, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept by the Equity Coordinator, Designated Employees and District/Supervisory Union Central Office for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

VII. Reporting to Other Agencies

- A. Reports to Department of Children and Families. When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901 et seq.
- B. Reports to Vermont Agency of Education. If a harassment complaint is made in a public school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under Vermont law for licensing action, the principal shall report the alleged conduct to the Superintendent and the Superintendent shall report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner. If a harassment complaint is made in an independent school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under Vermont law for licensing action, the head of school is encouraged to report the alleged conduct to the Secretary of Education.
- C. Reporting Incidents to Police
- a. FERPA Rights. Information obtained and documented by school administration regarding the school's response to notice of student conduct that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying may constitute an "educational record" regarding the student or student(s) involved as defined by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, such information may not be disclosed without prior parent approval to local law enforcement except in response to a lawfully issued subpoena, or in

connection with an emergency if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

- b. First Hand Reports. Nothing in this policy shall preclude persons from reporting incidents and/or conduct witnessed first-hand that may be considered to be a criminal act to law enforcement officials.
 - c. Hazing Incidents. It is unlawful to (1) engage in hazing; (2) solicit direct, aid, or attempt to aid, or abet another person engaged in hazing; or (3) knowingly fail to take reasonable measures within the scope of the person's authority to prevent hazing. It is not a defense in an action under this section that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity. Hazing incidents will be reported to the police in a manner consistent with the confidentiality rights set forth above in this section.
- D. Continuing Obligation to Investigate. Reports made to either DCF or law enforcement shall not be considered to absolve the school administrators of their obligations under this policy to pursue and complete an investigation upon receipt of notice of conduct, which may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

VIII. Disseminating Information, Training, and Data Reporting

- A. Disseminating Information. Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the District shall provide notice of this policy and procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and staff members, including references to the consequences of misbehavior contained in the plan required by 16 V.S.A. 1161a. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of hazing, harassment and bullying. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the District.
- B. Student Training. The school administrator shall use his/her discretion in developing age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help prevent hazing, harassment and bullying.
- C. Staff Training. The board or its designee shall ensure that teachers and other staff receive training in preventing, recognizing and responding to hazing, harassment and bullying.
- D. Data Gathering. Public school districts shall provide the Vermont Agency of Education with data requested by the Secretary of Education.

Legal References:

Title V, Section B, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794 et seq.;
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d;
Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 et seq.;
Family Education Rights Privacy Act; 20 U.S.C. §1232g;
Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. §§4500 et seq.;
Education, Classifications and Definitions, 16 V.S.A. §11(26);(30)(A);(32);
Education, 16 V.S.A. §140(a)(1); Education, 16 V.S.A. §166(e);
Education, Bullying, 16 V.S.A. §570c;
Education, Harassment, Hazing and Bullying, 16 V.S.A. § 570;
Education, Harassment, 16 V.S.A. §570a;
Education, Harassment, 16 V.S.A. §570c;
Education, Harassment, 16 V.S.A. §570f;
Education, Hazing, 16 V.S.A. §570b;
Education, Hazing, 16 V.S.A. §570f
Education, Discipline, 16 V.S.A. §1161a;
Education, Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils; 16 V.S.A. §1162;
Child Abuse, 33 V.S.A. §§4911 et seq.;
Adult Protective Services, 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq., all as they may be amended from time to time.
Washington v. Pierce, 179 VT 318 (2005).

APPENDIX F - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Access to Electronic Resources at WRVS

Information Technology has become a vital part of regular classroom activities at WRVS. Information Technology is available throughout the school building in many forms, both hardware and software, with network connections to the Internet in the classrooms, the Computer Lab and in the Library. Our goal is to support and enrich the curriculum by providing educational access to information technology for both teachers and students.

The Internet offers many resources for gathering information and communicating with people all over the world. With access to such resources comes the potential of acquiring materials that conflict with the educational objectives of WRVS. While the school uses Blocking Software and close supervision to restrict access to objectionable materials, we recognize that these measures are imperfect in that some information deemed inappropriate by some people may penetrate our precautions. The board wishes to optimize the educational benefits while minimizing the risk of school members acquiring inappropriate materials via the school's electronic resources. The school will provide instruction to all users about acceptable use guidelines, privacy rights, intellectual property, and copyright infringement. Use of electronic resources shall be consistent with related adopted school policies and administrative procedures. The school has the right and responsibility to place restrictions on the materials students access or publish electronically to assure consistency with the policies, procedures and educational mission of our school. We at WRVS believe that the benefits of information technology far outweigh the risks involved if reasonable precautions are taken. Supervising teachers have the right to monitor all student activity involving student use of information technology. E-mail is not a completely private form of communication. Files kept on the school's system, or other school-sanctioned systems, may be subject to inspection by the system administrator or supervising teachers. The school board gives the principal the authority to administer this policy and make judgments regarding these procedures.

Access to the electronic resources at WRVS is a privilege that shall be available to students and staff who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner that is consistent with WRVS' educational mission, goals, policies and procedures. They will be held liable for any misuse of those resources.

Disclaimer

WRVS shall not be responsible for loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the district's negligence or by the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained over the Internet is at the user's risk. WRVS disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Responsibilities

Access to Information Technology comes with responsibilities and depends on appropriate use. Inappropriate or irresponsible use of information technology at WRVS as defined by this statement of policy and procedures may result in privileges being limited or revoked. The loss of information technology privileges applies throughout the school.

Definitions:

Information Technology - refers to all electronic/mechanical devices or communications tools including but not limited to computers and other equipment such as printers, scanners, video equipment, digital cameras, monitors, modems, disk drives, etc. that handle information.

The Internet - refers to the worldwide physical network of computers that enables users to share information. The Internet offers services including but not limited to:

World Wide Web - pages of information and images published by people worldwide and made accessible over the Internet.

Chat Rooms - real-time discussions between people in different locations typing or talking on their computers to communicate.

Discussion Groups: (List Serves and News groups) - "Bulletin Boards" where people post questions, answers and comments on a particular topic. There are thousands of different Discussion Groups available

Email - refers to the use of computers to send and receive messages.

System Administrator - staff member responsible for maintaining the school's computer network

Acceptable Use Guidelines:

- Use of school information technology must be in support of WRVS educational goals.
- Be polite and respectful.
- Educators at WRVS will instruct their students regarding the safe and appropriate use of electronic resources.
- Users will not violate school rules regarding inappropriate language and behavior including but not limited to: submitting, publishing, displaying or retrieving any violent, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing or illegal materials.
- Users will show respect for equipment and not knowingly cause damage to any hardware or software, files or the networks.
- Much of the material on the school's electronic resources belongs to its authors so users will properly attribute material that they find from sources including but not limited to the World Wide Web and CD-ROM reference materials.
- Users will not reveal personal accounts and/or passwords.
- Users will not reveal personal addresses or phone numbers on the Internet.
- Users will respect privacy regarding mail and other types of files.
- Users will use only software provided or approved by the school in WRVS computers.
- Students will use information technology only with the expressed permission of the staff member/s responsible for the equipment being used.
- Students will not access the Internet without a responsible staff member supervising the activity.
- Students may have access to appropriate Internet discussion groups only after staff approval.
- Students may not use school information technology for personal commercial purposes.
- On school information technology students may only use school-sanctioned email.
- Only school-sanctioned and supervised chat rooms are allowed on school information technology.
- Any user noticing security problems on the Network shall notify a staff member.

Consequences for Violation of WRVS Acceptable Use Policy

1st Violation: Student will lose some or all information technology privileges until he or she meets with staff to develop a plan to reestablish the student's lost privileges. Parents or guardians will be notified. *(See note)

2nd Violation: Student will lose some or all information technology privileges for 60 days and parents or guardians must meet with staff to reestablish student's lost privileges. *(See note)

3rd Violation: Student will lose some or all information technology privileges for 90 days, minimum and parents or guardians must meet with staff to reestablish student's lost privileges. *(See note)

Note: The administration may revoke information technology privileges at any point that an infraction is deemed sufficient to warrant and may be withheld from one school year to the next if there are not enough days left in the school year to meet the terms of the consequence. Students may use WRVS' information technology resources during a period of revoked privileges **only** with a written pass from a teacher for a specific classroom assignment.



Orange East Supervisory Union

64 Main Street | PO Box 396 | Bradford, VT 05033

2026-2027 Annual Notification **Designation of Directory Information & Right of Refusal**

Schools in the Orange East Supervisory Union may disclose designated directory information on students and eligible students* without the prior consent of the parent of eligible students, and without any record of such disclosure. The following types of personally identifiable information have been designated directory information:

- Student's name, address, date of birth, dates of enrollment;
- Parent or legal custodian's name and address;
- Student's grade level classification;
- Student's participation in recognized school activities and sports;
- Weight and height of member of athletic teams;
- Student's diplomas, certificates, awards and honors received.

Disclosure may include such personally identifiable information contained or reflected in photographs.

If you are the parent of an eligible student currently attending any of the schools in the Orange East Supervisory Union, you have a right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of these types of information as directory information concerning your child or (if you are an eligible student) yourself, by providing written notice of your refusal, listing the type(s) of information which you refuse to have so designated, to the principal of the school your child attends (or the school you attend, if you are an eligible student), **not later than 15 working days of receipt of Annual Notice Regarding Student Records.**

**You are an eligible student if you are at least 18 years of age or are attending an institution of post-secondary education.*



Orange East Supervisory Union

64 Main Street | PO Box 396 | Bradford, VT 05033

To: Parents/Guardians of students and eligible students of Orange East Supervisory Union
From: Heather Lawler, Superintendent of Schools
Date: August 2026
RE: ANNUAL NOTICE REGARDING STUDENT RECORDS

As an eligible student (18 years or older) or a parent of a student enrolled in the Orange East Supervisory Union, you have certain rights concerning the education records, which the district maintains. These rights are afforded by the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA), and other legal requirements.

You have the right:

- A. To a list of the types and locations of student education records maintained by the district and the titles and addresses of the school officials responsible for those records.
- B. To inspect and review your education records within a reasonable time after such a request (no more than 45 days after the request is made, and before any IEP meeting or hearing related to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a student with a disability). This includes the right to:
 - i. a response to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the education record.
 - ii. have a representative of your choice (i.e. an advocate, relative, etc.) inspect and review the records on your behalf.
 - iii. a copy of any of your education records free of charge if the established fee effectively prevents you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records.
- C. To seek the correction of your education records through a request to amend them, or through a hearing procedure provided for by law, including the right to a copy of the Orange East Supervisory Union's "Procedures for Request to Amend Information in Education Records".
- D. To review the access log (record of disclosure of personally identifiable information) from your record.
- E. To examine and receive a copy of any policies or procedures of the Orange East Supervisory Union regarding education records by contacting the superintendent.
- F. To receive this notice in your home language, if it is other than English, or by any other primary mode of communication that you use unless it is clearly not feasible for the district to do so.
- G. To file complaints, regarding the Orange East Supervisory Union's failure to grant these rights by writing to the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4665.
- H. To have information from your education records withheld from disclosure to third parties without your prior written consent, except:
 - i. to school official with legitimate educational interests
 - ii. to official of another school of school system in which you (your student) seek(s) or intend(s) to enroll
 - iii. to federal or state government officials and other authorities, as provided by law
 - iv. in health and safety emergencies

- v. to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- vi. directory information which includes student's name, address, telephone number, current grade enrolled in degrees and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance and most recent previous education agency or institution attended, date and place of birth, and major field of study. *(Please see the following resource: FERPA General Guidance for Parents for more information -link below)*
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/parent-guide-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa-0>

NOTE: The education agency is neither required nor prohibited from disclosing personally identifiable information contained in these exceptions. This means that the supervisory union may release the information if it chooses to do so but the fact that the information is included in the exception does not create a requirement that the information be released to a third party. Either parent or an eligible student has the right to inspect, review, and release the student's education records unless the district is provided with evidence of a statute, court order or other legal document that specifically resolves these rights.

In order to request inspection and review of your education records, or if you have any questions concerning your rights in this matter or if you wish to have a copy of the district's policy, contact the principal of the school the student is enrolled in for an appointment.

For a complete copy of Parent's Rights in Special Education please contact Sabrina Brown, Director of Student Services, Orange East Supervisory Union (802-222-5216 x6111).

Notice of Destruction of Special Education Records

July 9, 2026

Individual student special education records which have been collected by the Orange East Supervisory Union related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of special education in the district must be maintained under state and federal laws for a period of five to seven years after special education services have ended for the student. Special education services end when the student no longer is eligible for services, graduates, completes his or her educational program at age 22 or moves from the district.

This notification is to inform parents/guardians and former students of the Orange East Supervisory Union's intent to destroy the special education records effective September 15, 2026 of students who are no longer receiving special education services and whose graduation year is prior to or inclusive of 2019. These records will be destroyed in accordance with state law unless the parent/guardian or eligible (adult) student notifies the school district otherwise.

Special education records may be useful to former students and/or their families when applying for Social Security benefits, rehabilitation services, college admission, or other purposes. Eligible adult students and/or their legal guardian may contact the Special Education office to request a copy of these records before they are destroyed.

Your request for the original file must be received by September 15, 2026. For more information call 802-222-5216 ext. 6114.



Orange East Supervisory Union

64 Main Street | PO Box 396 | Bradford, VT 05033

August 2026

Special Education Services: Child Find Notice

In accordance with state and federal laws Orange East Supervisory Union, serving the towns of Bradford, Corinth, Groton, Newbury, Ryegate, Topsham, Thetford, and Wells River serves notice that special education and related services are available to appropriately identified individuals between the ages of birth through twenty-one. Any individual wishing to take advantage of these services or desiring additional information may contact Sabrina Brown, Director of Student Services at (802-222-5216 x6111)

If there are parents within the school districts who should have this information interpreted or written in other languages, please notify the Orange East Supervisory Union.

Educational Support System

All Vermont schools are required to have a tiered system of academic, social emotional and behavioral supports commonly referred to as "MTSS." Therefore, per policy, all schools within Orange East Supervisory Union must develop and maintain, in consultation with parents, a comprehensive system of education that includes a wide range of layered supports. This system of support is designed to enhance, supplement and intensify classroom instruction resulting in practices that support, to the greatest extent possible, the success of all students in the general education classroom. This approach recognizes that both high quality instruction and additional layers of support may be necessary for some students. The schools of Blue Mountain, Bradford, Newbury, Oxbow, Thetford, and Waits River Valley have developed an educational support system and educational support teams. Parents, teachers and/or students may make a referral to school based teams through their classroom teacher when a student is at risk of failure or requires additional assistance in order to succeed in the general education environment. This system is designed to provide all students with the supports and interventions they need to be successful regardless of eligibility for categorical programs.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Orange East Supervisory Union not to discriminate in admission or access to or treatment or employment in educational programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, disability, age, or marital/civil union status under the provisions of Title VI of the 1972 Educational Amendments; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act; and the Individual with Disabilities Education Act.

Any persons having inquiries concerning Orange East Supervisory Union's compliance with the regulation implementation Title VI, Title IX, ADA or Section 504, are directed to contact Heather Lawler, Superintendent of Schools, 64 Main Street, PO Box 396, Bradford, VT 05033 (802-222-5216), who has been designated by the District to coordinate efforts to comply with these regulations.

Asbestos Management Plans

In accordance with Section 763.93, pertaining to the Asbestos in Schools Identification and Notification Rule, of 40 CFR Part 763 of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), Orange East Supervisory Union notifies all parties of the availability of the asbestos management plans at the administrative offices of each affected facility.



Orange East Supervisory Union

64 Main Street | PO Box 396 | Bradford, VT 05033

Education Rights of Children and Youth that are Homeless

This public notice provides information about the rights of children, youths, and unaccompanied youth that are homeless to attend a public school or public charter school. An unaccompanied youth is a youth that does not live with a parent or guardian. This notice includes information to help you know if you or someone you know is considered homeless and is eligible for services from our school district. Children or youths that are homeless have rights that include the right to attend public schools. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact our District Liaison:

Name: Sabrina Brown

Title: Director of Student Services

Email: sabrina.brown@oesu.org

Phone: (802)222-5216 x6111

District Address: OESU PO Box 396 Bradford VT 05033 (64 Main St in Bradford)

This letter can be translated into different languages. Please contact the District Liaison for assistance.

Our school district actively enrolls and provides services for children and youth that are homeless. If you are homeless or know of a child, youth, or unaccompanied youth that may be homeless, please contact the person listed here for help.

Who is “homeless”? Children or youth (including children of migrant workers) who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are homeless. Fixed means the home is connected to the ground and is not easy to move. Regular means a place where the child sleeps every night. Adequate means the home meets modern standards of living. Children who are sharing someone else’s housing because they lost theirs or because they cannot afford their own housing are homeless. Children and youths who are homeless may be living in:

- motels;
- hotels;
- trailer parks (this does not refer to a mobile home (trailer) park, this refers to a type of camping ground for fifth wheel camper trailers or other types of movable campers);
- camping grounds because they do not have an adequate home;
- emergency or transitional shelters;
- or are abandoned in hospitals.

Children and youth who are homeless may have a place they usually sleep that is a public or private place not meant to be a regular place for people to sleep. They may also be living in:

- cars;
- parks;
- public spaces;
- abandoned buildings;
- substandard housing (housing that does not meet modern standards of living);
- bus or train stations;
- or other similar settings.

If you are not sure, please contact the person listed on this notice.

What are the education rights of children and youth that are homeless? Our schools provide the same educational services to all students without regard to their living situation. Children and youth who are homeless also have rights that include: o Based on what is best for the child or youth, the child or youth can continue to attend the “school of origin” or be immediately enrolled in any public school where the student now lives. This includes any school that students who are not homeless attend that is in the area where the child or youth now lives.

- Being given services without delay, such as transportation and meal programs.
- Other appropriate services and programs, such as programs for:
 - o gifted children;
 - o children with disabilities;
 - o English learners;
 - o career and technical education;
 - o and preschool.
- Help in school through the district’s federally funded Title I program. A student that is homeless can receive Title I services even if the student is not attending a Title I funded school.
 - o School activities for parents and/or guardians
 - o Participation in athletics, fine arts, or other extracurricular activities
 - o Being treated the same as students who are not homeless by school personnel

What is the “school of origin”? ‘School of origin’ means the school the child or youth attended before becoming homeless or the school the child or youth last attended, including a preschool. When the child or youth completes the final grade level of a school of origin, then ‘school of origin’ means the school the child or youth would attend at the next grade level. The district must consider what is best for the child or youth when making a decision about which school the student will attend. Placement at the school of origin must be a choice unless doing so is not what is best for the student or is against the wishes of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth.

What if there is disagreement about school placement? If the district places a student in a school that is not the school of origin or a school requested by the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth, then the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal (ask to change) the placement decision. The student will be immediately enrolled in the school that the student or parent asked for while an appeal is being considered. The district homeless liaison listed on this notice will provide information and assistance to appeal a placement decision.

No Child or Youth Should Be Denied Access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education



Orange East Supervisory Union

64 Main Street | PO Box 396 | Bradford, VT 05033

August 2026

Hello Families,

You are receiving this message because your child's school receives Title I funds through the Consolidated Federal Program. Title I schools must ensure they provide the required parent notifications under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act). This is general information required by the US Department of Education and the Vermont Agency of Education to be distributed to families. This information is not specific to any one student or group of students. This is general information about Title I and the rights families have through Title I.

The Supervisory Union, on behalf of eligible Title I schools, is required to ensure our Parent Family Engagement Policy is distributed to all families. [Here is a link to this policy](https://www.oesu.org/boards/orange-east-supervisory-union). All policies are available on the OESU website—<https://www.oesu.org/boards/orange-east-supervisory-union>.

The Supervisory Union, on behalf of Title 1 eligible schools, is required to provide information on Title I. This information is included after this letter.

The Supervisory Union, on behalf of Title I eligible schools, is required to distribute written procedures to all families for filing a complaint alleging a violation in the administration of programs.

Statutory Requirement

Pursuant to Sec 8304 (a)(3)(C), of the ESEA, a State Educational Agency (SEA) shall adopt written procedures that offer parents, public agencies, other individuals, or organizations a method for the receipt and resolution of complaints alleging violations in the administration of the Programs.

- [Vermont Agency of Education ESEA Complaint Procedures](#)

The Supervisory Union, on behalf of Title I eligible schools, is required to notify parents of their right to request the credentials of their child's teacher(s). Families also have the right to ask if their child works with a paraprofessional.

- [Title I, Part A, Right to Ask](#)

Please contact Rick Dustin-Eichler, Director of Curriculum, Federal Programs Grant Manager, if you have any questions about this information or Title I in general.

Sincerely,
Rick Dustin-Eichler
george.dustin-eichler@oesu.org
802-222-5216 x6113

Creating learning communities... where students are engaged and successful

Our Participation in Title I

- OESU participates in the consolidated federal program. This is a series of federal Title grants, including Title I, which funds salaries and educational programs across our supervisory union. We receive approximately \$893,709.02 in Title I alone and approximate \$1.3 million in total through Title I, II, and IV grants.

Qualifying for Title I

- To qualify for Title I funding, a school must meet certain criteria. There are two ways to qualify for Title I: through Targeted Assistance or the Schoolwide Program. Eligibility for these programs depends on a school's free and reduced lunch percentage. For targeted assistance, at least 35% of a school's student population must qualify for free and reduced lunch. Schools in the Targeted Assistance program can use Title I funds only for specific students who meet certain criteria. To qualify for the School-Wide Program, at least 40% of a school's student population must qualify for free and reduced lunch. OESU Schools qualifying for Title I (OUUSD Schools, Waits River, and BMU) also qualify for the School-Wide Program. This means that services and programs funded through Title I can be used for all students, *schoolwide*.

Use of Title I Funds

- We use Title I funds to improve student achievement by funding additional teachers to work with students in math and literacy. We have also used Title I funds to purchase educational materials for students. Materials, services, and programs purchased with Title I funds must be high-quality, researched, and evidence-based.

Parent Family Engagement

- Orange East Supervisory Union encourages parents and guardians to be involved and informed about their students' education.
- Each school has a Compact outlining the staff and families' commitment to a child's education. These plans were written using family survey information. Your survey may have been conducted recently, or it may have been conducted in the past. Depending on the school, Compacts are available in school handbooks, and/or on the OESU and/or school website. If you cannot locate your school's Compact, please contact your school.
- Schools utilizing Title I funds must hold an annual Title I meeting to provide information to families. This is done through the supervisory union in collaboration with schools.

Your Rights under Title I

- You have the right to know the teaching credentials of your child's teacher. You have the right to know whether your child works directly with a paraprofessional and what qualifications that paraprofessional has.
- You have the right to see how your child performed on state assessments, and you have the right to know how your child's school performed on state assessments.

English Language Learners

- Schools must notify parents within 30 days of the beginning of school if a child is placed in a Title I- or Title III-funded language instruction educational program. Specifically, they must be told the reasons for the identification, including the child's level of English proficiency, how it was assessed, the status of the child's academic achievement, the methods of instruction to be used in the LIEP, how the program will meet the child's educational needs, and specific exit requirements.

Title I Annual Meeting

- Each school receiving Title I funds shall hold an annual Title I Meeting to inform members of the school community about the school's Title I program.
- Families have the right to request additional meetings.

Title One Policies

- All OESU policies are available on [OESU.org](https://oesu.org).
- [Parent Family Engagement Policy](#)

Questions or further assistance

- If you have any questions about your rights or any other aspect of your school's Title I standing, please contact me, Rick Dustin-Eichler, at the Orange East Supervisory Union. You can best reach me at george.dustin-eichler@oesu.org or 802-222-5216 x6113

WAITS RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL 2026-2027 CALENDAR

Staff In-Service / No School for Students

No School

Early Release for Students

JULY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JANUARY '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1st | Holiday Break

15th | Staff In-Service (No School)

18th | Holiday

18 Student Days (94)

19th- 25th | Staff In-Service Days (No School)

26th | First Day of School

AUGUST '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

4 Student Days (4)

FEBRUARY '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

3rd - | Early Release

22nd- 26th | Winter Break

15 Student Days (109)

4th | Early Release

7th | Holiday

30th | Early Release

SEPTEMBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

21 Student Days (25)

MARCH '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1st- 2nd | Winter Break

24th | Early Release

21 Student Days (130)

9th | Staff In-Service (No School)

12th | Holiday

OCTOBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

20 Student Days (45)

APRIL '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

15th | Early Release

16th | Staff In-Service (No School)

19th- 23rd | Spring Break

16 Student Days (146)

5th | Early Release

6th | Staff In-Service (No School)

25th-27th | Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

17 Student Days (62)

MAY '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

12th | Early Release

31st | Holiday

20 Student Days (166)

9th | Early Release

21st-31st | Holiday Break

DECEMBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

14 Student Days (76)

JUNE '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

15th | Anticipated Last Day Early Release

16th | Staff In-Service (No School)

11 Student Days (177)

Total:
177 Student Days
186 Teacher Days
187 New Teacher Days