

Northwest Primary School



Student/Family Handbook 2026-2027

Rutland City Public Schools
Rutland, Vermont
Phone (802) 786-1776
Fax (802) 773-1912

A Message from the Principal, Mrs. Corey Smith...

Dear Northwest Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! We look forward to welcoming our returning students, and, of course our new Kindergarteners and ROOTS PreK students. Northwest Primary School sincerely hopes that our students and families enjoyed a relaxing summer and are just as excited for the upcoming year

The following 2026-2027 school year handbook outlines specific practices, procedures, expectations, and district policies. The purpose of providing this information is to provide transparency, clarity, and clear communication with our students, parents, families, and guardians. Please review this handbook with your child, sign the last page, and return it to school with your child. Note that this handbook is a working draft, and Northeast Primary School reserves the right to revisit and adjust our practices as necessary or to address unforeseen needs. Any changes or enhancements to the practices contained in this handbook will be conveyed to all students, parents, guardians, and families and posted online.

We remain committed to the importance of the home-to-school partnership and the powerful impact of these relationships. Please know that your voice is important to us. We value your input and will seek it directly three times a year through a Google survey. We are all looking forward to a great school year and cannot wait to begin working with our students, parents/guardians, and families. We encourage you to reach out to the school if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

We are looking forward to a great year ahead. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. We are here as a team and I value your thoughts and ideas.

Sincerely,

Corey Smith

Corey Smith
Principal, Rutland Northwest Primary School
corey.smith@rcpsvt.org
802-786-1776

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Staff Directory

Northwest Primary School Staff

80 Pierpoint Avenue

Rutland Vermont 05701

School Phone: 802-773-1946, ext. #1776 Fax: 802-773-1912

Attendance Line to report and absence: 802-786-1776

Please note: email for all staff is firstname.lastname@rcpsvt.org

Principal.....	Corey Smith	Special Educator.....	Verna Borden
SpEd Coordinator.....	Jessica Henderson	Special Educator.....	Ryanne Spaulding
Early Childhood Coord...	Megean Martin	PK Special Educator.....	Michelle Goodrich
Admin Asst Main Office..	Elizabeth McKee	School Psychologist.....	Leigha Charron
Admin Asst Sp. Ed.....	Amy Hier	Speech & Language.....	Stephanie Fleming
School Nurse.....	Bethany Maguire	PK Speech & Language...	Ashley Brua
School Counselor.....	Amanda Gurney	Occupational Therapist...	Susan Boles
School Counselor.....	Erin Holbert	Physical Therapist.....	Erin Cavalieri
School Counselor.....	Kayja Champine	Art.....	Kate Richards
Starship Paraeducator....	Alex Badgley	Library Paraeducator.....	Joanne Piontek
ROOTS Preschool.....	Angela Hayes	Music.....	Carrie Kohl
Kindergarten.....	Sue Cody	Physical Education.....	Bryan Cupoli
Kindergarten.....	Netta Austin	Tapestry Coordinator.....	
Kindergarten.....	Melanie Long		
Kindergarten.....	Kristen Ramey		
1st Grade.....	Megan Coloutti		
1st Grade.....	Samantha Hill		
1st Grade.....	Ashley Hoyt		
1st Grade.....	Cathy O'Rourke		
2nd Grade.....	Gail Campopiano		
2nd Grade.....	Summer Lambert		
2nd Grade.....	Kayla Russo		
Interventionist.....	Tammie McGee		
Interventionist.....	Joy Ray		
Special Educator.....	Lindsay Zeitler		

Northwest & RCPS Vision

Northwest Vision Statement (adopted Spring 2019)

At Northwest School we value a safe, nurturing environment that fosters independence as students develop a lifelong love of learning. **Every Student! Every Day!**

RCPS Vision Statement

Rutland City Public Schools cultivates a passionate, diverse, and resilient community of critical thinkers who learn with purpose, create innovative and responsible solutions, and lead lives of integrity.

RCPS Mission Statement

We empower students to be accomplished individuals and community members.

We will:

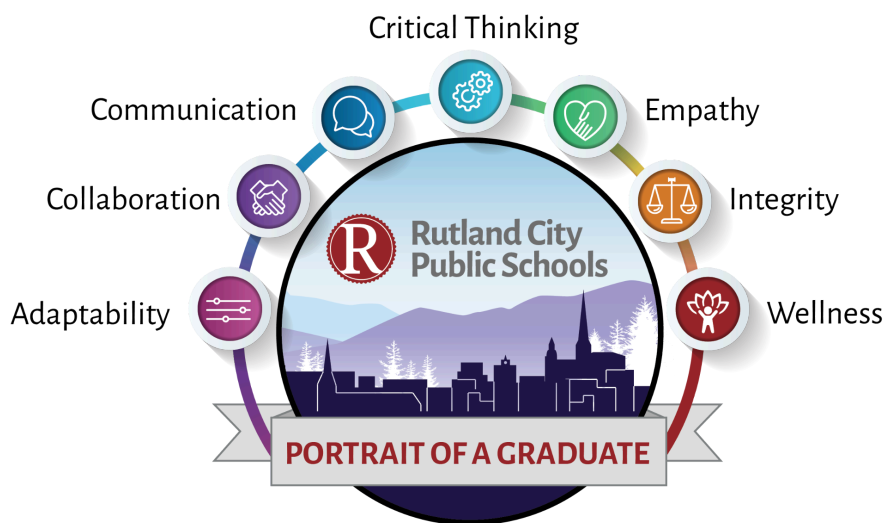
- Deliver a comprehensive and engaging curriculum for a diverse student body.
- Provide a safe and healthy environment that fosters mutual respect.
- Address the social and emotional needs of all students.

Students will:

- Take responsibility for their education.
- Develop their intellectual, creative, social, emotional and physical abilities.
- Be productive members of the school and community.

Every Student, Every Day

Adopted November 27, 2007 by the Rutland City Board of School Commissioners



Important Dates

8/26	First Day of School
9/7	No School - Labor Day
9/23	Open House
10/8	Early Release for Parent-Teacher Conferences
10/9	No School - Parent Teacher Conferences 8:00-11:30am
10/12	No School - Teacher In-service
10/30	Early Release
11/11	No School/Veteran's Day
11/25-11/27	No School - Thanksgiving Break
12/23-1/1	No School - December Break
1/18	No School - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
1/29	Early Release
2/15	No School - President's Day
2/22-2/26	No School - February Break
3/11	Early Release for Parent-Teacher Conferences
3/12	No School - Parent Teacher Conferences 8:00-11:30am
3/15	No School - Teacher In-Service
4/2	Early Release
4/19-4/23	No School - Spring Break
5/31	No School - Memorial Day
6/11	Tentative Last Student Day

School Day and Hours

School starts promptly at 8:00 am and ends at 2:30 pm. Students need to begin and end their day with their classroom community to ensure routines are maintained and instructional contact time is maximized.

Students may enter the building at 7:45 am for breakfast. Breakfast is offered between 7:45-8:00. If buses arrive late, breakfast will still be offered to those students. There is no morning recess. Students arriving at 7:45 who do not need breakfast, may enter their classroom.

Students may NOT be dropped off before 7:45 am. To leave your child unsupervised before 7:45 places your child in an unsafe situation.

Transportation Information

Getting your child to and from the right location is important to us. Your child's safety is our number one goal. Help us to always make that happen by following these guidelines.

Transportation Changes:

To ensure the safety of our students, the school will not permit any transportation or after-school changes in a student's routine unless a signed note or a phone call is received by the main office from the student's parent/guardian. **Those requests must be completed by 1:30 pm.** Signed requests can be sent back to school in your student's folder, emailed to Elizabeth.Mckee@rcpsvt.org, or called in the front office at 802-773-1946.

All transportation change requests must come directly from the parent/guardian. *Messages cannot be relayed through the student.* Students will go home in the usual manner unless an early phone call or a note from the parent/guardian clearly specifies that day's alternative plan. We understand that occasionally an emergency arises that requires a change of plans. Parents/Guardians should not make frequent calls to the school to change after-school plans.

Car Rider Drop-Off in the Morning:

1. Enter the school parking lot using the driveway at the south end of the Northwest campus (across from PPLC). This line often starts forming early, but students are to stay in their cars until staff come out to assist.
2. Pull up as far as possible in the line. Staff will direct you.
3. Students may unload when they are greeted by a staff member who helps by opening the car door.
4. Staff will be outside to accompany students inside until 8:00. If you arrive after 8:00, please park your car in the parking lot and walk your student into the main office to sign in.
5. Cars are not permitted in the bus lane during arrival time. This can create unsafe conditions for our students who are arriving at school on the buses.

Car Rider Pick-Up in the Afternoon:

1. Enter the school parking lot using the driveway at the south end of the Northwest campus (across from PPLC). Pull up as close to the next car in line as possible and park your car. Do not leave your parked car, unless you want to stand next to it while you wait. If you need to enter the building, please park your car in a parking space before doing so.
2. At 2:30, staff will exit the building and will radio for students. Students will be dismissed from the playground entrance and they will be directed to a dismissal spot along the sidewalk.
3. When your child gets to their dismissal spot, they will be instructed by supervising staff to enter your vehicle. Please help them get into their car seats and seatbelts as quickly as possible to avoid delays in moving the line forward.
4. After students board, the line of cars moves forward and exits the parking lot and a new group of cars will be called forward. If you are ready to go before the cars in front of you, please be patient and wait until the whole line starts to move. Trying to move around and out of line increases the risk of accidents.

Please note, in keeping with Vermont State law and Rutland City Public Schools' policy, all school grounds are idle free zones. Vehicles may idle for up to 5 minutes according to the law and policy, but we request that all cars be turned off upon stopping on school property.

Bus Transportation:

Children assigned to a particular bus are not permitted to ride on any other school bus without a written request from a parent/guardian. Requests must be turned in to the main office, which will then notify the busing department. Students riding on the bus may not be let off at a stop other than their own without written permission. **Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their child if he/she misses the bus. An adult must be at the bus stop to meet PreK-2 students as they get dropped off in the afternoon.** Make every effort to be at the bus stop on time; if no one is there to meet your child, they will be transported back to the school, the family will be contacted by phone and you will have to pick up your child at school. Students will not be dropped off at places of business or make unexpected stops along the route.

Bus Expectations

- Cellphones are prohibited.
- Do not eat, drink or chew gum on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Cooperate with the driver's instructions.
- Smoking/vaping is prohibited.
- Respect the interior and exterior of the vehicle. Vandalism will be referred to the SRO.
- Stay in your seat
- Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus and out of aisles and to yourself.
- The bus driver is authorized to assign seats to students who have trouble following the rules.
- Use kind and respectful language. No physical or verbal aggression/abuse toward others will be tolerated.

Bus Consequences

Bus drivers will issue a bus referral for students violating the rules for appropriate bus behavior

stated below. Administration will address bus referrals. Due to the significant impact of behavior problems on the school bus, RCPS has the following tiered disciplinary practices:

- First referral: Phone call, letter sent home, and conference with the student.
- Second referral: Phone call, letter sent home and conference with the student and parent
- Third referral: Phone call, letter sent home and removal from the bus for up to 5 days. If behaviors continue, removal from the bus may consist of an extended period of time, up to and including the remainder of the year.

The school bus is a privilege and not a requirement of the school district unless transportation is stipulated in a student's Individualized Education Plan. The school district must maintain appropriate safety and conduct of students on the bus. If a student is removed from the bus for any duration of time, the parent must arrange alternate transportation.

Bus Stops

Students are expected to be on time at their designated bus stop. Parents should have students at the stop 10 minutes in advance and be at the bus stop 10 minutes early at the end of the day. **Student behavior at the bus stop is the responsibility of the parent; RCPS staff members do not supervise these areas.** An adult should remain at the stop until the bus arrives.

Switching Busses/Bus Stops:

Students may not get off the bus anywhere other than their assigned bus stop, **unless the school has a letter from the parents/guardian requesting such permission be granted.** Since our buses are full, we cannot allow students to change buses to visit another child even with a parent/guardian note. Students who do not regularly ride the bus may not ride a bus without school approval, even with parent permission. Students must also pick up their bus at their own assigned location in the morning.

Building Security and Locked Door Procedures

Parents and other authorized guests are always welcome in our school. To ensure the safety of our students and maintain an uninterrupted learning environment, we kindly ask all visitors to follow these procedures:

1. Visitors enter our building through the main entrance and check in at the main office only through the locked door buzzer system. Visitors cannot enter through locked side doors, the playground, or any door other than the main office.
2. If you are volunteering or entering the building beyond the vestibule, you will be required to present a government-issued ID or another acceptable form of identification. Our Raptor security system will print you a visitor's badge that must be worn at all times. Upon departure, you will need to sign out using the same system.
3. Dropping Off Items - If you need to drop something off for your child, please leave it at the office. Office staff will deliver the item to your child's classroom.
4. Early Dismissal - If you need to pick up your child before regular dismissal, please sign them out at the office and wait in the vestibule.

5. Meeting with Teachers - Teachers are often available before school, during specials, and after school. Please reach out directly to your child's teacher to arrange a convenient time to meet.

Attendance

Please call the attendance line at 802-786-1776 when your child will be absent from school for any reason.

Attendance is required by law for all students between the ages of six and eighteen. The Rutland City School Board, Superintendent, and administration all require that students attend when school is in session as consistent attendance is important for school success. When absent or tardy it is difficult to catch up on missed instruction and projects.

Excused Absences occur when a family member/caregiver has called in and given a reason for absence for up to ten days throughout the school year. If we have not yet heard from the family/caregiver, we may reach out to the family/caregiver. Email communication is also acceptable.

Absences may also be at the discretion of the building principal. If there is a question about whether an absence should be excused, talk with the principal. After a total of 10 excused absences, a doctor's note or other note verifying the absence (counselor, dentist, etc) will be required to excuse any additional absences.

Unexcused Absences occur when we have no information as to why the child is absent, or after 10 excused absences and no doctor's note or other note verifying the absence is provided.. We may call the parent/guardian, but if we only leave a message, the absence is still unexcused. Status of absence can be changed if we should receive a doctor's note or the family/caregiver chooses to use the day as one of the ten excused absences.

After 10, 15, or 20 cumulative absences, both excused and unexcused, families will receive a restorative re-engagement letter notifying them of the absences.

After **10 unexcused absences**, a certified letter will be mailed home and a meeting will be set up with the family to discuss re-engagement. School administration, the student's school counselor, the student's case manager (if applicable), the student's parents/guardians, and when appropriate, the student will all be invited to the meeting.

After **15 unexcused absences**, a certified letter will be mailed home and a home visit will be attempted and a second meeting will be scheduled.

After **20 unexcused absences**, a certified letter will be mailed home and the school will file an affidavit of truancy with the State's Attorney's office, as well as make a DCF report noting educational neglect.

We urge parents to plan family vacations around the times school is not in session. However, in the event that a parent needs to remove their child for more than 3 days due to a family trip, you must obtain a form from school (no less than one week in advance of your child's absence.) The completed form is to be given to the principal for approval. If an excused absence is granted, parents will need to develop a plan that demonstrates that the trip will have educational merit. The primary responsibility will be with the parents and the student to make up the regular classroom work missed during the child's absence. Under no circumstances will excused absences be granted for more than ten days in a school year.

Late Arrival/Tardiness

Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. are late and will be marked as "tardy." A student who arrives late, even if only 5 – 10 minutes, begins the day at a disadvantage. A late start for a child means limited to no time to socialize, put away belongings, and prepare for the day. This can be stressful for a child! Stress impacts learning. Please support your child in being on time for school. **Our start time is 8:00 a.m.**

Early Dismissal

Dismissal starts at 2:30. Please make every attempt to limit the number of times that you must pick your child up earlier than 2:30 and keep these to emergencies or unavoidable appointments. If you must pick up your child early due to an appointment or emergency, please sign your child out at the office. Your child will be brought to the office to meet you.

Please note, we do not "pull students" from class to wait in the office for parents. All students will remain in class, learning with their peers, until a parent or authorized adult arrives to sign them out. **We must ask visitors to remain in the front entry area so we know who is in the building, for safety reasons and so that classroom instruction is not interrupted.**

Field Trips

Field trips are part of the school curriculum and many of the related school procedures apply. The school's "CONSENT FORM For Field Trip, PG Movies, Release of Student Images and Directory Information" will be found in student folders. Please sign and return these. Without this permission, your child will not be allowed to attend the field trip and other arrangements will be made by the school.

Parents/Guardians will receive details of each trip shortly before the actual date. If for some reason a parent/guardian does not want their child to attend a particular trip, we will make other arrangements for that child to remain in school. A student not attending a field trip should not miss school that day. Every student that is going on a field trip is required to report to school for regular attendance and must travel with the group to the site they are visiting. *The school retains the right to exempt students from field trips, or other school activities who have demonstrated an inability to maintain behavior that would interfere with the learning experience or jeopardize the safety of the students or others.*

Based on factors of individual trips, parents and/or guardians are sometimes needed or requested to attend a field trip as chaperones. When on a field trip, siblings are not permitted to attend as chaperones are responsible for their own child as well as other children in an assigned small group. ALL CHAPERONES NEED A COMPLETED BACKGROUND CHECK AND MUST BE FINGERPRINTED PRIOR TO ATTENDING. This process takes no less than four weeks to complete. Bus transportation for chaperones will be dependent on group size and availability per the administration. Chaperones should anticipate driving themselves to and from the field trip location.

Any chaperone that plans to take their child with them from the site of the field trip instead of returning to Northwest Elementary must obtain permission from the classroom teacher and main office prior to the trip. Teachers are responsible for communicating the guidelines for chaperones to ensure the safety and supervision of all students.

No purchases at gift shops are allowed by or for any students while on field trips. In addition, technology devices will not be permitted on field trips.

Breakfast, Lunch, and Recess

Breakfast and lunch are free for all Rutland City Public School students. Students have the option of having lunch provided throughout school lunch program or can bring lunch from home. Purchases made beyond the first breakfast or lunch require payment. If students do not have school lunch and want milk they will need to buy milk.



Breakfast hours are from 7:45 – 8:00 a.m.. We are not able to heat food items up for individual students. Each classroom will have a snack period. Snacks are not provided by the school and families are asked to pack a healthy snack every day.. **Soda, energy and/or caffeinated beverages and candy are not allowed at school.** Snacks are not to be shared or exchanged. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing in special snacks for your child's classmates for a celebration. Additionally, on designated days during classroom snack times, students will be introduced to an array of fresh fruits and vegetables through our federally subsidized program, "Fresh Fruits and Vegetables".

This year, Northwest Primary School's food service program will be managed by Genuine Foods*. To view menus, visit [MySchoolMenus.com](https://www.myschoolmenus.com) and select Northwest Primary School. You will find detailed ingredient lists, nutrition facts, and allergen information to help your family stay informed.

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

Food Allergies:

Please let us know if your child has any food allergies. We can make lunchroom accommodations for allergies but cannot safely do this for food served in the classroom. Given

that snacks will be eaten in the classrooms, if there is a child with a specific food allergy (such as peanuts) in your child's class, then those allergens will not be allowed as part of any child's snack. We will send home pertinent instructions to you if one of your child's classmates has allergies.

Recess and the Playground

Please dress your child according to weather conditions. Students will be outdoors each day for periods up to 30 minutes. Teachers have assigned duties during recess times and there are no provisions for supervising children who wish to remain indoors. Outdoor recess does not take place if the temperature is below 10 degrees (ambient temperature). When the temperature is close to 10 degrees, the local weather is monitored. If a student has a chronic or occasional health problem, s/he may remain indoors during recess only if the school receives an original doctor's written and signed order with reasons and expected duration as requested.



In preparation for outdoor recess during cold weather, students should always wear a warm jacket or snowsuit, snow pants, warm socks, mittens/gloves, scarf/neck warmer, hat/hood, and a ski mask for those who are susceptible to cold air. Adults from home are responsible for appropriate outdoor clothing. Students will not be restricted from any activities based on what they are wearing or not. If students are dressed inappropriately, they may get wet. We urge families to keep a bag with a spare set of clothes in their student's backpack.

If a student acts unsafely and/or inappropriately, staff members on duty will intervene with verbal instruction and redirection. If the problem behavior persists, students may be asked to sit on a bench for a break or may be asked to stand by a staff member for a short period. Starship referrals will be made if problems persist or pose a safety risk. For persistent problems, recess staff will notify classroom teachers of inappropriate behaviors.

Recess/Lunch Periods

Grade Recess / Lunch

K: 11:30-12:00 / 12:00 - 12:30.

1st and 2nd grade: 12:00 - 12:30 / 12:30-1:00

We ask that children **do not** bring in anything from home, especially i-Pads, iPods, cell phones (even broken ones), toys, playground equipment and video games. If students bring in these items, an adult will take them and return them to the student at the end of the day. If the item comes again, a call will be made and parent/guardian will need to come into the school to collect the items.

Weather and Emergency Situations

Inclement Weather

Announcements about the closing of schools will be made via our "Messenger" system which simultaneously telephones parents of Northwest students with information concerning school closings. Additionally, announcements are made over the following radio stations: WJJR, WSYB,

PEGTV and WZRT. The decision to close schools will be made by 6:00 a.m. Please note: Announcements will state Rutland City Public Schools or Rutland Northwest Primary School NOT Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union as that is a different school district.

Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency situation, the schools will follow the “Emergency Response Plan.” In the event of an emergency with students remaining at school, parents will report to the gym at NW to sign out children. Children will be brought to the gym by a school staff member.

In the event of an evacuation, parents will be notified to pick up their children at Giorgetti Park or the Rutland Intermediate School auditorium.

Curriculum / Specials

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. Copies of the K-12 Standards can be found on the Internet. Social skills, good work habits, and problem solving skills are consistently integrated into all learning tasks. Our young students also learn through hands-on activity, discovery, creativity, movement, and play. With this in mind, physical activity, music, and artistic expression are a part of learning and provide students with ongoing opportunities to develop and practice appropriate intellectual and social skills.

Our instructional model provides a multi-tiered systems of support, depending on the individual needs of our learners. Since children develop differently, it is not unusual for some students to read earlier than others. If a child has difficulty learning a skill, multiple levels of support are provided to help.

Language arts or literacy are taught through combined listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The teaching of phonics, fluency, and comprehension skills are taught using good literature, nonfiction, and poetry. For math, we use the iReady Math Program. Science and Social Studies are integrated and taught through thematic units.

Specials

Along with the core curriculum, students receive weekly instruction in art, library skills, music, social emotional learning, and physical education.

The Art Program is designed to expand upon the students’ creative and imaginative growth. Using the elements and principles of design, such as line, color, shape, value, texture, students create a variety of art projects. Students also have the opportunity to explore a variety of art media, including tempera paints, watercolors and oil pastels and are exposed to works of art by famous artists.

The Library Program focuses on developing an interest in and fostering excitement about reading and books. Students also receive instruction in using the library learning center and selecting books for reading in the classroom and at home.

Music is a lifelong process that affects every corner of our world. Students are offered the opportunity to experience music in a variety of ways. Class activities include rhythmic development, awareness of the singing voice, introduction to instruments, the use of rhythm instrument accompaniment, development of listening skills, creative movement and appreciation for the works of various composers.

The Physical Education Program is designed to encourage exploration of movement and motor skills with increased awareness of self-esteem and personal fitness. Basic rules and skills of sports are introduced, as well as new games that incorporate sharing, group play, cooperation, and safe fun.

Social, emotional, and behavioral skills are taught and practiced weekly during our Social Skills special. Positive character traits, awareness of feelings, problem solving, coping with complex situations or feelings, mindfulness, and personal safety are all taught by our School Counselors during this special block.

Progress Reports

Parents and guardians are encouraged to communicate with us when they have questions or concerns. Student progress is discussed formally during two parent/teacher conferences in October and March. Additional meetings may also be initiated if needed. Written progress reports are sent home in January and June.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

All students are unique individuals, learn different, and have a right to learn with their peers in the least restrictive and appropriate environment. Children are naturally curious and learn through active multi-sensory multi-modal learning and problem solving. Learning opportunities are more effective if they are relevant, stimulating, and reinforced with family and community engagement. Just as learning styles and abilities vary, so do the methods for supporting learning. With this in mind, Northwest School offers a multi-tiered system of supports or interventions.

Educational Support Team (EST)

The Vermont Department of Education requires that every Vermont public school offers educational support team services to children at risk. Northwest School has developed a procedure that provides teachers, specialists, parents and the school community access to a multi-disciplinary team. The team uses positive solution techniques to assess needs, identify resources, and develop specific remedial or supplemental strategies to accommodate all students.

The purpose of this team is to ensure each child's success in a regular classroom setting. The team will continue its involvement and support by developing a follow-up plan that may recommend further adjustments, supports and/or additional resources and services. Parents will be kept informed throughout the process and may attend the EST meeting upon request.

Special Education and Related Services

Special education services are provided to students who have met criteria for these tier 4 services. For the most part, students receive their special education services in a “pull out” model of instruction. If deemed necessary, these students may also receive support from related service providers for speech, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy.

Intervention Services

Intervention services are part of our multi-tiered system of support and provide targeted instruction designed to meet specific needs to children identified as needing this service. This is not part of the special education program.

Counseling Services

School counselors provide in-school counseling and support for students in need. Counselors also develop classroom interventions to help students develop skills to become self-reliant and resilient. Counselors play a critical role as the liaison between home and school for many families and provide guidance in securing support from outside agencies in Rutland County.

Student Conduct / Starship Room

The primary goal at Northwest Primary School is to create a safe and nurturing environment for our students. We seek to build within each child a life-long love of learning, sense of responsibility, self-discipline, a positive self-image, and respect for others. To achieve this goal, cooperation between home and school is essential. Both the home and school must share in assuming the responsibilities necessary to assure the rights of all students and provide an instructional environment of the highest quality

Our teachers and staff follow a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports program that integrates Responsive Classroom and reinforces our STAR Student models of behavior and expectations. Student conduct procedures focus on helping a child restore relationships, learn from mistakes, and understand the logical consequences of his/her actions.

The Rights and Responsibilities of students at Northwest Primary School include:

- The right to a safe environment and the responsibility to act in a safe manner.
- The right to be treated with respect and courtesy, and the responsibility to behave with respect and courtesy toward all others in the school.
- The right to an education without interference from others and the responsibility to conduct oneself in a manner that does not interfere with the education of others.
- The right to a quality education and the responsibility to conduct and prepare oneself in a manner that allows one to learn at the highest level capable for that student.

Positively reinforced “STAR Student” Standards of Behavior:

S – We Show respect to oneself and others at all times.



- T – We** Treat others with kindness.
A – We will Always be safe.
R – We Reach for the stars (do your best).

Unsafe and Inappropriate Behavior:

Certain behaviors are inappropriate in a school setting and can not be tolerated. Consequences for serious behavior of this nature will be directly related to the severity of the student's conduct and may include community service, loss of privileges, a parent meeting, and in extreme cases suspension or expulsion from school.

Starship Room

The Starship Room is designed to help children regulate in a more proactive manner, when needed. In addition, in Starship we focus upon both intervention and prevention by:

- Assisting students in developing appropriate coping and social skills.
- Providing space/personnel to serve students who need to practice sensory regulation skills and/or calm down.
- Assisting students in developing a plan for success in the classroom
- Following-up with students to evaluate the effectiveness of their "STAR Success Plans."
- Following up with classroom teachers regarding student progress.
- Students may self-refer to Starship or a teacher may refer.

School Nurse and Health Services

Vision and hearing screenings are completed annually for all students. Parents are notified if problems are identified or suspected.

Students who are sick or sent home by the school nurse need to be fever-free (temperature below 100F) for a full 24 hours **without** the use of fever-reducing medications (i.e. Tylenol, Advil, Motrin) before returning to school. Children who vomit or have diarrhea should remain home until they have not vomited or had diarrhea for a full 24 hours. Children who are on an antibiotic need to have a full 24 hours of dosages in their system before returning to school, provided they are well enough to do so.

Medications:

Prescription medications may be given by the nurse at school only with written permission from the prescribing physician. If/when non-prescription medications need to be given during school hours, written permission from a parent is required. **All medication must be in its original labeled container and needs to be brought to and from school by an adult NOT a student.** Medications, such as antibiotics, given 3 times daily or less can usually be given at home. Cough drops are considered a medication and need to follow the same guidelines as above.

Communicable Disease Control

If your child contracts a contagious disease, such as head lice, scabies, chicken pox, or a bacterial infection, this must be reported to the school nurse.

Head Lice

Northwest Primary School recognizes that Pediculosis (head lice) is a common challenge for families and agencies dealing with children. While lice cannot be completely eliminated, we encourage cooperative measures within the school community to control for lice and nits. Nits and Head Lice procedures emphasize keeping children in school when head lice is detected, rather than sending them home, risking unnecessary loss of school time. This procedure sets guidelines stating that children should be allowed to return to school after proper treatment, and should not be prevented from returning to school because of the presence of nits. Additionally, it is the procedure of the school district to prevent, monitor, and manage outbreaks of head lice at the school level.

Heath and Safety Monitoring

Participation in recess and physical education is recognized as an important function of the school day. Children will not be excused from participation unless a written notes from the student's physician exempts the student from such activity. Re-entry dates need to be provided by the physician.

Heath Records:

The nurse will keep a health record for each student. To keep these records accurate and helpful to plan appropriate safety and educational responses, all health concerns need to be relayed to the nurse by parents or guardians.

Immunizations:

All children, per Vermont State Law, must have a record of current immunizations at school. The school nurse works with families to ensure that all students are adequately immunized and that accurate records are maintained. Schools are mandated to enforce the Vermont Legislature regarding immunization requirements needed for attending school. Students not meeting vaccine or exemption requirements may not attend school without a provisional admittance form. Students provisionally admitted to school must be fully immunized within six months of enrollment. Forms may be obtained by your physician or are available at: <https://www.healthvermont.gov>.

Sunscreen

Topical, non-aerosolized sunscreen may be provided and administered by individual students. Sunscreen must be accompanied by written authorization from a parent or guardian. School staff shall not be required to assist students in applying sunscreen and are not responsible for ensuring that sunscreen is applied to the student. Additional information can be found at <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/16/031/01389>

Parental Rights

Parental/Guardian Rights and Concerns

You have a right to:

- Inspect and review all records*
- Challenge the content of records

- Obtain copy of all records
- Request information regarding the credentials of their child's teachers
- Express to the school administration any ideas or thoughts on services that would support all of our students within our school-wide plan

The Principal is the legal custodian of all student records. Parents of students (an eligible students over the age of 18) have the right to inspect the student's education records; request amendments to them; consent to the disclosure of certain information; and file complaints with appropriate agencies. A copy of the school's policy regarding student records and their disclosure is available from the Office of the Superintendent of Rutland Public Schools (Rutland Public Schools District Policy #7370 in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

In the event that a parent/guardian has a concern, please start by contacting your student's classroom teacher. If the concern cannot be resolved by the classroom teacher, reach out to a building administrator by contacting the main office at 802-773-1946.

Parental/Family Involvement

Parents/guardians are a vital part of a child's education. We strong encourage your participation in school activities. All available research supports the conclusion that family involvement in education improves students' learning, achievement, and attitude toward school.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to share opinions, knowledge, talents, wishes, and concerns with us when these can support and improve our children and school. Parents and guardians are invited to attend the school's Title I meetings to be held during the parent information presentations by the administration during Open House.

Parent Teacher Collaborative (PTC)

Northwest PTC Mission Statement: The Northwest PTC strives to enrich the learning and programs of teachers and students, as well as the Northwest community as a whole. Involvement helps parents and teachers become partners in the educational process of our children. Meetings will be held throughout the school year. If you are unable to attend the meetings, there are many other ways you can help in the classroom and school environment. Please reach out to the office if you would like to join.

Student Birthdays

We are happy to celebrate student birthdays with special birthday recognition, songs, and/or treats brought in by our families. Due to health and safety restrictions and allergies (such as latex, animals, plants, and many food products), we ask that you speak with teachers to get prior approval if you want to send in a treat to celebrate. Healthy snacks, small party favors, or a new book or game **for the class** are encouraged as choices. We do not distribute party invitations at school for children's birthday parties unless all students in the class will be getting an invitation, nor do we distribute class lists for this purpose (due to privacy laws).

Student Technology and Personal Items

Student-owned cellphones, wearable personal devices (e.g. smartwatches/earbuds) and other technology are to be turned off and stored away in a backpack or locker during the school day. These personal items are prohibited from student use during the school day. Additional information can be found in the Policy section under “RCPS Student Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Device Expectations”.

We encourage electronic devices and other items such as toys, sporting equipment, and games to be left at home to avoid any problems. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. For recurring violations, confiscation of items will occur, as well as disciplinary action, and a parent meeting with the student and school administration.

After School Tapestry Program

Tapestry is the RCPS afterschool and summer (out-of-school) program for K-6. We provide intentional programming to promote a culture of learning in tandem with our schools and support youth as they transition from grade to grade and school to school. We do this by providing opportunities for youth to do things they enjoy, and by exploring new things.

We are 21st Century Community Learning Centers and State of Vermont Licensed Child Care Centers, which means both that we are highly regulated for the safety of kids and staff, and that we embrace continuous quality improvement, to provoke learning and inquiry, for students and staff.

School year and summer programming is a mixture of staff created (informed by student input), external 'guest presenters,' and field trips. In the summer, each program is off site for roughly two days per week for field trips, swimming, etc.

To learn more about Tapestry at Northwest School, please contact Debby Marchese, Site Coordinator at Debby.Marchese@rcpsvt.org or (802)779-7581. You can also reach our administrative office at (802)786-1959 or info@tapestry-epic-afterschool.org.

AI and Technology Use

At Northwest Primary School, we are committed to supporting safe, developmentally appropriate use of technology for our young learners. While our Kindergarten through 2nd grade students do not use artificial intelligence (AI) tools independently, they may access digital platforms and educational software on school-managed Chromebooks that may incorporate AI features (such as speech recognition or adaptive learning).

Our Approach:

- Students are only permitted to use school-approved programs and websites under adult supervision.
- No generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or image generators) are introduced directly to students at this level.

- We prioritize digital citizenship, including age-appropriate conversations about how technology works and how to use it responsibly.

Family Guidance:

- Families are encouraged to monitor their child's use of technology at home and ask questions if unsure about any program their child is using.
- As children progress through Rutland City Public Schools, we will continue to support their development as ethical, informed users of technology.

Video Surveillance

To maintain order, safety, and discipline on school grounds, our district uses video surveillance cameras on school grounds and on school buses. Please refer to Rutland City Public School District's Video Surveillance Policy for complete details:

<https://www.rutlandcitypublicschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/7411-Use-of-Video-Surveillance-Cameras.pdf>

Federal, State, and Local District Policies and/or Laws

The following is a partial collection of policies regarding you and your child that you should review carefully. Please refer to the complete policy manual of the Rutland City Public Schools for all relevant policies. Policy manuals are available on Rutland City Public School's website.

Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students

I. Statement of Policy – Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, & Bullying

The Rutland City Public School District(hereinafter "District") is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

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

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

The District shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying, 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, the school's code of conduct, school rules regarding behavior, or expectations for employees.

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.
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. ***At Northwest School and PPLC, the designated employees to receive complaints are Corey Smith, Amanda Gurney, or Jessica Henderson.**
3. Designate an Equity Coordinator to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by federal law regarding discrimination. This role may also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.
4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated, the District shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

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

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 of information provided by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying.

C. **"Complainant"** means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment or bullying.

D. **"Designated employee"** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment and bullying pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school building are identified in Appendix A of this policy.

E. **"Employee"** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District, an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, "agent of the school" includes supervisory union staff.

F. **"Equity Coordinator"** is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding race- based discrimination) for the District and for coordinating the District's compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the District's *Preventing and Responding to Harassment of Students and Harassment of Employees* policies. This role may also be assigned to Designated Employees.

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

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

- (1) Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors,

and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations when one or both of the following occur:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

official academic break.

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

J. **“Organization”** means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members 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.

*This policy replaces the following policies upon its adoption by the Board of School Commissioners: Policy 7400: “Prevention of Harassment of Students”
Policy 7401: “Policy on the Prevention of Bullying of Students”
Policy 7493: “Hazing”*

Firearms, Weapons, and Fireworks

Student possession or use of firearms, weapons, knives, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, or any potentially dangerous devices or substances of any kind are forbidden and will result in immediate suspension, possible expulsion and legal action. [RPS Policy 7490]

Student Records

The Principal and EEE-Grade 2 Special Education Director are the legal custodians of all student records. Parents of students (and eligible students over the age of 18) have the right to inspect the student's education records; request amendments to them; consent to disclosure of certain information; and file complaints with appropriate agencies. A copy of the school's policy regarding student's records and their disclosure is summarized below and is available from the Office of the Superintendent of the Rutland Public Schools. (Rutland Public Schools District Policy #7370 in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The following guidance provides parents with general information about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). While this guidance reflects our best and most current interpretation of applicable FERPA requirements, it does not supersede the statute or regulations. FERPA gives custodial and noncustodial parents alike certain rights with respect to their children's education records, unless a school is provided with evidence that there is a court order or State law that specifically provides to the contrary. Otherwise, both custodial and noncustodial parents have the right to access their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information from the records (except in certain circumstances specified in the FERPA regulations, some of which are discussed below), and the right to file a complaint with the Department. When a student reaches 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, he or she becomes an "eligible student," and all rights under FERPA transfer from the parent to the student. The term "education records" is defined as those records that contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

FERPA generally prohibits the improper disclosure of personally identifiable information derived from education records. Thus, information that an official obtained through personal knowledge or observation, or has heard orally from others, is not protected under FERPA. This remains applicable even if education records exist which contain that information, unless the official had an official role in making a determination that generated a protected education record. Under FERPA, a school is not generally required to maintain particular education records or education records that contain specific information. Rather, a school is required to provide certain privacy protections for those education records that it does maintain. Also, unless there is an outstanding request by a parent to inspect and review education records, FERPA permits the school to destroy such records without notice to the parent.

Access to Education Records

Under FERPA, a school must provide a parent with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her child's education records within 45 days following its receipt of a request. A school is required to provide a parent with copies of education records, or make other arrangements, if a failure to do so would effectively prevent the parent from obtaining access to the records. A case

in point would be a situation in which the parent does not live within commuting distance of the school. A school is not generally required by FERPA to provide a parent with access to school calendars or general notices such as announcements of parent-teacher meetings or extra-curricular activities. That type of information is not generally directly related to an individual student and, therefore, does not meet the definition of an education record. Under FERPA, a school is not required to provide information that is not maintained or to create education records in response to a parent's request. Accordingly, a school is not required to provide a parent with updates on his or her child's progress in school unless such information already exists in the form of an education record.

Amendment of Education Records

Under FERPA, a parent has the right to request that inaccurate or misleading information in his or her child's education records be amended. While a school is not required to amend education records in accordance with a parent's request, the school is required to consider the request. If the school decides not to amend a record in accordance with a parent's request, the school must inform the parent of his or her right to a hearing on the matter. If, as a result of the hearing, the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth his or her views. That statement must remain with the contested part of the student's record for as long as the record is maintained. However, while the FERPA amendment procedure may be used to challenge facts that are inaccurately recorded, it may not be used to challenge a grade, an opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about a student. FERPA was intended to require only that schools conform to fair recordkeeping practices and not to override the accepted standards and procedures for making academic assessments, disciplinary rulings, or placement determinations. Thus, while FERPA affords parents the right to seek to amend education records which contain inaccurate information, this right cannot be used to challenge a grade, an individual's opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about a student. Additionally, if FERPA's amendment procedures are not applicable to a parent's request for amendment of education records, the school is not required under FERPA to hold a hearing on the matter.

Disclosure of Education Records

Under FERPA, a school may not generally disclose personally identifiable information from a minor student's education records to a third party unless the student's parent has provided written consent. However, there are a number of exceptions to FERPA's prohibition against nonconsensual disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records. Under these exceptions, schools are permitted to disclose personally identifiable information from education records without consent, though they are not required to do so by FERPA. Following is general information regarding some of these exceptions.

One of the exceptions to the prior written consent requirement in FERPA allows "school officials," including teachers, within a school to obtain access to personally identifiable information contained in education records provided the school has determined that they have "legitimate educational interest" in the information. A school may disclose personally identifiable information from education records without consent to a "school official" under this exception only if the school has first determined that the official has a "legitimate educational interest" in obtaining access to the information for the school. Another exception permits a school to disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without consent,

to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. The sending school may make the disclosure if it has included in its annual notification of rights a statement that it forwards education records in such circumstances. Otherwise, the school must make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent in advance of making the disclosure, unless the parent or eligible student has initiated the disclosure. The school must also provide a parent with a copy of the records that were released if requested by the parent.

FERPA permits a school non-consensually to disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records when such information has been appropriately designated as directory information. "Directory information" is defined as information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information could include information such as the student's name, address, e-mail address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended, photograph, grade level (such as 11th grade or junior year), and enrollment status (full-time or part-time).

FERPA also permits a school to disclose personally identifiable information from education records of an "eligible student" (a student age 18 or older or enrolled in a postsecondary institution at any age) to his or her parents if the student is a "dependent student" as that term is defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code. Generally, if either parent has claimed the student as a dependent on the parent's most recent income tax statement, the school may non-consensually disclose the student's education records to both parents. There are several other exceptions to FERPA's prohibition against non-consensual disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records, some of which are briefly mentioned below. Under certain conditions (specified in the FERPA regulations, 34 CFR Part 99), a school may non-consensually disclose personally identifiable information from education records:

- to authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the U.S. Secretary of Education, and State and local educational authorities for audit or evaluation of Federal or State supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs;
- in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received;
- to state and local authorities pursuant to a State statute concerning the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve the student whose records are being disclosed;
- to organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the school making the disclosure for the purposes of administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, or improving instruction;
- to comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena; and
- in connection with a health or safety emergency.

As stated above, the conditions specified in the FERPA regulations have to be met before a school may non-consensually disclose personally identifiable information from education records in connection with any of the exceptions mentioned above.

Complaints of Alleged Failures to Comply with FERPA

The Office may investigate those timely complaints that contain specific allegations of fact giving

reasonable cause to believe that a school has violated FERPA. A timely complaint is defined as one that is submitted to the Office within 180 days of the date that the complainant knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation. Complaints that do not meet FERPA's threshold requirement for timeliness are not investigated. If we receive a timely complaint that contains a specific allegation of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a school has violated FERPA, we may initiate an administrative investigation into the allegation in accordance with procedures outlined in the FERPA regulations. If a determination is made that a school violated FERPA, the school and the complainant are advised, and the school is informed of the steps it must take to come into compliance with the law. The investigation is closed when voluntary compliance is achieved.

Please note that a parent should state his or her allegations as clearly and succinctly as possible. To aid us in efficiently processing allegations, we ask that a parent only include supporting documentation that is relevant to the allegations provided. Otherwise, we may return the documentation and request clarification. This Office does not have the resources to review voluminous documents and materials to determine whether an allegation of a violation of FERPA by a school is included. A parent may obtain a complaint form by calling (202) 260-3887. For administrative and privacy reasons, we do not discuss individual allegations and cases via email. Please mail completed complaint forms to the Office (address below) for review and any appropriate action.

Complaint Regarding Access

If a parent believes that a school has violated FERPA by failing to comply with the parent's request for access to his or her child's education records, the parent may complete a FERPA complaint form and should include the following specific information: the date of the request for access to the student's education records; the name of the school official to whom the request was made (a dated copy of any written request to the school should be provided, if possible); the response of the school official, if any; and the specific nature of the information requested.

Complaint Regarding Amendment

If a parent believes that a school has violated FERPA by failing to provide the parent with an opportunity to seek amendment of inaccurate information in his or her child's education records or failed to offer the parent an opportunity for a hearing on the matter, the parent may complete a FERPA complaint form and should include the following specific information: the date of the request for amendment of the student's education records; the name of the school official to whom the request was made (a dated copy of any written request to the school should be provided, if possible); the response of the school official, if any; the specific nature of the information for which amendment was requested; and the evidence provided to the school to support the assertion that such information is inaccurate.

Complaint Regarding Disclosure

If a parent believes that a school has violated FERPA by improperly disclosing personally identifiable information from his or her child's education records, the parent may complete a FERPA complaint form and should include the following specific information: the date the alleged improper disclosure occurred or the date the parent learned of the disclosure; the name of the school official who made the disclosure, if that is known; the third party to whom the education records were disclosed; and the specific nature of the information disclosed.

This guidance document is designed to provide parents of minor students with some basic information regarding FERPA and their rights, and to address some of the basic questions most frequently asked by parents. You can review the FERPA regulations, frequently asked questions, significant opinions of the Office, and other information regarding FERPA at our Website as follows: <http://fpco.ed.gov>. If, after reading this guidance document, you have questions regarding FERPA that are not addressed here, you may write to the Office for additional guidance at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

Rule 4500 State Rules for the Use of Restraint & Seclusion in Schools

This is a summary of the Vermont State regulation pertaining to school use of physical restraint or seclusions in emergency situations. Northwest School will use a passive restraint only as a last resort and if imminent danger or risk to the child or others is imminent. All staff have state approved training in crisis response and interventions and in the rare occasion that this is warranted we follow Rule 4500 and you will be notified as such. If you have any questions or concerns about this please call the school principal as soon as possible.

4500.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purposes of these rules are to:

- a. Create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment in schools;
- b. Promote positive behavioral interventions and supports in schools; and
- c. Ensure that students are not subjected to inappropriate use of restraint or seclusion.

4500.2 APPLICABILITY

These rules are applicable to all learning environments that receive public funding, or over which the Vermont Department of Education has regulatory authority

3. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of these rules, the following definitions apply:

1. Behavioral Intervention Plan means a plan that details strategies to address behaviors that impede learning, or are ongoing, and do not readily respond to general intervention or classroom management techniques, by teaching prosocial skills and other positive replacement behaviors. The plan may include positive strategies, program or curricular modifications, and supplementary aids and supports required to address problem behaviors.
2. Chemical Restraint means a drug, medication or chemical used on a student to control behavior or restrict movement that is not:
 - a. Prescribed by a student's licensed physician for the standard treatment of a student's medical or psychiatric condition; and
 - b. Administered as prescribed by the licensed physician.
3. Functional Behavioral Assessment means the analysis of a student's behavior patterns

before, during, and after rule-breaking or other inappropriate behavior for the purpose of guiding the development of a behavioral intervention plan.

4. Mechanical Restraint means the use of any device or object that restricts a student's movement or limits a student's sensory or motor functions unless under the direction of a healthcare professional for medical or therapeutic purposes. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student for the specific and approved therapeutic and safety purposes Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Page 2 of 9 for which such devices were designed including:

- a. Restraints for medical immobilization,
- b. Adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance or alignment;
- c. Vehicle safety restraints including a seat belt or harness used for balance or safety on a car or bus; or
- d. Seat belts in wheelchairs or on toilets.

5. Parent means:

- a. A biological or adoptive parent of the child;
- b. A legal guardian of the child; c. A person acting in place of a biological or adoptive parent, including a grandparent, stepparent or other relative with whom the child lives, or a person legally responsible for the child's welfare; d. A foster parent or developmental home provider who has been appointed the educational surrogate parent by the Educational Surrogate Parent Program; or e. An educational surrogate parent.

6. Physical Escort means the temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, or back of a student who is exhibiting minimal resistance for the purpose of directing movement from one place to another.

7. Physical Restraint means the use of physical force to prevent an imminent and substantial risk of bodily harm to the student or others. Physical restraint does not include:

- a. Momentary periods of physical restriction by direct person-to-person contact, accomplished with limited force and designed either i. to prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to himself/herself or another person; or ii. to remove a disruptive student who is unwilling to leave the area voluntarily;
- b. The minimum contact necessary to physically escort a student from one place to another;
- c. Hand-over-hand assistance with feeding or task completion; or
- d. Techniques prescribed by a qualified medical professional for safety or for therapeutic or medical treatment.

8. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports means an approach to preventing and responding to targeted behavior that:

- a. Is based on evidence-based practices;
- b. Is proactive and instructional, rather than reactive;

- c. Can operate on individual, group, classroom, or school wide levels;
- d. Includes a system of continual data collection; and
- e. Relies on data-driven decisions.

9. Prone Physical Restraint means holding a student face down on his or her stomach using physical force for the purpose of controlling the student's movement.

10. School means a learning environment receiving public funds or over which the Vermont Department of Education has regulatory authority.

11. School Personnel means individuals working in schools as defined in 4500.3(10) who are employed by the school or who perform services for the school on a contractual basis, and school resource officers, while acting in that capacity.

12. Seclusion means the confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is prevented or reasonably believes he or she will be prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include time-out where a student is not left alone and is under adult supervision.

13. Substantial Risk means an imminent threat of bodily harm where there is an ability to enact such harm. Substantial risk shall exist only if all other less restrictive alternatives to defuse the situation have been exhausted or failed or the level of risk prohibits exhausting other means.

14. Supine Physical Restraint means holding a student on his or her back using physical force for the purpose of controlling the student's movement.

15. Student means a student enrolled in a school as defined in paragraph 10. 4501

Prohibitions:

4501.1 School personnel and contract service providers are prohibited from imposing on a student any of the following as defined in rule 4500.3: a. Mechanical restraint, b. Chemical restraint, c. Any physical restraint, escort or seclusion that restricts or limits breathing or communication, causes pain or is imposed without maintaining direct visual contact.

4501.2 Physical restraint or seclusion shall not be used: a. For convenience of staff; b. As a substitute for an educational program; c. As a form of discipline or punishment; d. As a substitute for inadequate staffing or training; e. In response to a student's use of profanity or other verbal or gestural display of disrespect; or f. In response to a verbal threat unaccompanied by demonstrated means of or intent to carry out the threat

4501.3 The restraints and seclusion prohibited by these Rules shall not be considered "reasonable and necessary force" as that term is used in 16 VSA §1161a(c). Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Page 4 of 9 4501.4 Schools may have policies and procedures for the use of physical restraint and seclusion in school-wide safety plans, provided such plans are consistent with these Rules.

4502 PERMISSIBLE USE OF RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

4502.1 Permissible Use of Physical Restraint Physical restraint, not otherwise prohibited by these Rules, may be used only: a. When a student's behavior poses an imminent and substantial risk of physical injury to the student or others; b. Within the limits set forth in 16 VSA §1161a; c. Less restrictive interventions have failed or would be ineffective in stopping such imminent danger of physical injury or property damage; d. In accordance with a school-wide safety plan that is consistent with these rules; and e. In a manner that is safe, proportionate to and sensitive to the student's: i. Severity of behavior; ii. Chronological and developmental age; iii. Physical size; iv. Gender; v. Ability to communicate; vi. Cognitive ability; and vii. Known physical, medical, psychiatric condition, and personal history, including any history of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or trauma.

4502.1.1 Prone and supine physical restraints are more restrictive than other forms of physical restraint and may be used only when the student's size and severity of behavior require such a restraint because a less restrictive restraint has failed or would be ineffective to prevent harm to the student or others.

4502.2 Permissible Use of Seclusion: Seclusion, not otherwise prohibited by these rules, may be used only: a. When a student's behavior poses an imminent and substantial risk of physical injury to the student or others; b. When less restrictive interventions have failed or would be ineffective in stopping such imminent risk of physical injury; c. As a temporary intervention; d. When physical restraint is contraindicated; e. When there is no known developmental, medical, psychological or other contraindication to its use; f. When the student is visually monitored at all times by an adult; and g. In a space large enough to permit safe movement that is adequately lit, heated, ventilated, free of sharp or otherwise dangerous objects; and in compliance with all fire and safety codes.

4502.3 In rare circumstances where the use of physical restraint or seclusion may be necessary due to a student's pattern of dangerous behavior that is not responsive to less restrictive Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools may be included in an individual safety plan only if all of the following conditions apply: a. School personnel have reviewed and agreed to the safety plan; b. The use of physical restraint and seclusion complies with these Rules; c. The student has a documented history showing a series of behaviors in the preceding six (6) months that have created an imminent and substantial risk of physical injury to the student or others in the school; d. A comprehensive, data-driven, functional behavioral assessment has been conducted; e. A behavioral intervention plan, emphasizing positive behavioral interventions and supports, has been implemented; f. The educational planning team, IEP team or Section 504 team has reviewed the student's program and placement to determine whether it is sufficient to meet the student's unique needs; g. The criteria for use are clearly identified; h. Any contraindications for use are identified; i. Staff implementing the individual safety plan have received training from a state recommended training program; j. The parents are fully informed of the inherent risks of using restraint and seclusion; k. The parents provide informed consent to the use of restraint and/or seclusion, which shall be revocable at any time; and l. The ongoing need for an individual safety plan is reviewed and revised, as appropriate, and in any event at least annually.

4502.3 Any restraint or seclusion imposed as a result of an individual safety plan is subject to all the reporting, documentation and debriefing requirements set forth in 4503, 4504 and 4505

below.

4502.4 Physical restraint or seclusion shall only be imposed: a. By school personnel or contract service providers who have been trained to provide the selected intervention unless, due to the unforeseeable nature of the danger of the circumstance, trained personnel are not immediately available; a. When a restrained student is monitored face-to-face by school personnel or contract service providers; or b. If personnel safety is significantly compromised by face-to-face monitoring, or the student is in seclusion, school personnel or a contract service provider are in direct visual contact with the student.

4502.5 Physical restraint or seclusion shall be terminated as soon as: a. The student demonstrates that he/she is in unnecessary pain or significant physical distress indicating a possible need for emergency medical assistance or that his/her breathing or communication is compromised; or b. The student's behavior no longer poses an imminent danger of physical injury to the student or others or danger to property; or c. Less restrictive interventions would be effective in stopping such imminent danger of physical injury or property damage.

4502.6 Following termination of any physical restraint or seclusion, the student shall be evaluated and monitored for the remainder of the school day on which physical restraint or seclusion Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools is imposed. The evaluation shall include a routine physical/medical assessment conducted by someone not involved in the restraint or seclusion, and documentation of any injury received by the student as a result of the restraint or seclusion.

4503 REPORTING THE USE OF RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION.

4503.1 To the School Administrator. Any person who imposes a restraint or seclusion shall report its use to the school administrator as soon as possible, but in no event later than the end of the school day of its use.

4503.2 To Parents. a. The school administrator shall make a documented attempt to provide verbal or electronic notice of any incident of restraint or seclusion to the student's parents (as defined in 4500.3(13)) as soon as practical but in no event later than the end of the school day of its use; and b. Shall provide written notice to the parents within 24 hours of each use of restraint or seclusion that includes: i. The date and time of its use; ii. A description of the restraint and other intervention used; iii. The date and time when the debriefing session will occur; including notice that the parents have the opportunity to participate in the debriefing; and iv. The name and telephone number of the contact person who can provide further information.

4503.3 To the Superintendent. The school administrator shall report the use of restraint or seclusion to the superintendent of the Supervisory Union whenever: a. There is death, injury or hospitalization to staff or student as a result of a restraint or seclusion; or b. An individual employee or contracted service provider has engaged in the use of physical restraint or seclusion three (3) separate times on one (1) or more students; or c. Physical restraint has been used for more than fifteen (15) minutes; or d. Any student has been restrained or secluded three (3) or more times per school year; or e. A student has been restrained or secluded more than once in a school day; or f. A student is restrained or secluded who is not on a behavioral

intervention plan; or g. Restraint or seclusion has been used in violation of these rules, including the use of any prohibited form of restraint. Reports to the Superintendent shall be made within three school days of the incident that requires reporting and shall include all the information set forth in Rule 4504 required of a written record of each use of restraint or seclusion.

4503.3.1 Learning environments other than public schools shall fulfill this reporting requirement by reporting to the Superintendent of the Supervisory Union that is the LEA or sending district for the student. If there is no sending district or LEA, this requirement shall be fulfilled by reporting to the Commissioner of the Department of Education in accordance with Rule 4503.4. Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

4503.4 To the Commissioner of the Department of Education. The Superintendent of the supervisory union shall report the use of restraint or seclusion to the Commissioner of the Department of Education within three (3) school days of receipt of a report indicating any the following: a. There is death, injury requiring outside medical treatment or hospitalization to staff or student as a result of a restraint or seclusion; or b. Physical restraint or seclusion has been used for more than thirty (30) minutes or c. Physical restraint or seclusion has been used in violation of these rules, including the use of any prohibited restraint or seclusion. The report shall include all the information set forth in Rule 4504 required of a written record of each use of restraint or seclusion.

4504 DOCUMENTATION

Each school shall maintain written records of each use of restraint and seclusion. The records shall be maintained by the school administrator and shall include the following: a. The name, age, gender and grade of the student; b. The date, time and duration of the restraint or seclusion; c. Any injuries, death or hospitalization to student or staff resulting from the use of restraint or seclusion; d. The location where the restraint or seclusion occurred; e. The precipitating event[s] leading up to the restraint or seclusion; f. A list of school personnel who participated in the application, monitoring and supervision of the student while restrained or secluded; g. The type of restraint or seclusion used; h. The reason for the restraint or seclusion; i. A description of all the interventions used prior to the application of the restraint or seclusion; j. Whether the student has a behavioral intervention plan and/or individualized education plan, Section 504 plan or educational support plan; and k. The date notification was provided to the student's parents.

4505 DEBRIEFING FOLLOWING USE OF RESTRAINT OR SECLUSION

Following each incident of restraint or seclusion, the school administrator shall implement follow-up procedures that include: a. Within two (2) school days, a proper staff person reviewing the incident with the student in a manner appropriate to the student's age and developmental ability, to discuss the behavior[s] that precipitated the use of restraint or seclusion; b. Within two (2) school days, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint or seclusion to discuss whether proper restraint or seclusion procedures were followed, including the use of proper procedures to prevent the need for restraint or seclusion; c. An opportunity for parents to participate in the review of an incident of restraint or seclusion within four (4) school

days: Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Page 8 of 9 i. Parents shall receive prior written (including e-mail) notice of the review meeting; and ii. The meeting shall be convened at a mutually acceptable time and place; and d. Determining, in consultation with the parents, any specific follow up actions to be taken.

4506 ANNUAL NOTIFICATION

Annually, at or before the beginning of the academic year, each school (defined in 4500.3(10)) shall inform all school personnel, and parents of students enrolled in the school of the policies pertaining to the use of physical restraint and seclusion and the intent to emphasize the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and its intention to avoid the use of physical restraint or seclusion to address targeted student behavior.

4507 COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

4507.1 Filing a Complaint a. A parent (as defined in 4500.3(13)) or school personnel may file a complaint regarding the use of restraint or seclusion at any time in accordance with school district policy. b. The complaint shall be in writing and shall be directed to the principal, director or administrator of the school in which the student participates. c. If the person filing the complaint is unable to submit the complaint in writing, the recipient of the complaint shall complete the form based on a verbal complaint. In this case, the complainant shall be provided with a copy of the complaint.

4507.2 Investigation: All complaints shall be investigated by the school or district and written findings issued within thirty (30) days;

4507.3 Unresolved Complaints: Unresolved complaints shall be directed to the superintendent of the Supervisory Union where the student resides in accordance with the school board's established complaint process. A student on an individualized education plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan may also use the dispute resolution options available under Rules 2365.1.4 – 2365.1.6, if appropriate. 4503 Monitoring and Corrective Action

4508 MONITORING AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

The commissioner of the Department of Education shall review reports received pursuant to Rule 4503.4 and identify those schools in need of additional training and, when those reports reflect an over-use of these interventions, shall direct the school to work with the department to develop a corrective action plan. Rule 4500: The Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Schools

4509 STATE RECOMMENDED TRAINING

The Department of Education shall maintain a directory of recommended physical restraint training programs, which must include at least the following elements: a. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of dangerous behavior, relationship-building, and the use of alternatives to physical restraint; b. Identification of

dangerous behaviors that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm to determine if physical restraint is warranted; c. Simulated experience in administering and in receiving a variety of physical restraint techniques, across a range of increasingly restrictive interventions; d. Instruction regarding the effects of physical restraint on the person restrained, including monitoring physical signs of distress and how to obtain medical assistance; e. Instruction regarding investigation of injuries and complaints. A school may use a training program that is not on the state recommended list if it submits a plan to the Commissioner of Education demonstrating how that training program meets the purposes of these Rules and contains the elements listed above.

USDA NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **Mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **Fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

RCPS Student Cell Phone and Personal Electronic Device Expectations

Rutland City Public Schools is committed to maintaining a learning environment that promotes student focus, safety, engagement, professionalism, positive mental health, and effective

communication. In alignment with Vermont Act 72 and the Vermont Agency of Education Model Policy on Student Use of Cell Phones, students are prohibited from using or accessing personal electronic devices during the instructional day from arrival to dismissal except as specifically outlined below. This aligns with our Strategic Plan in the areas of Teaching and Learning and Wellness of Inclusive School Communities, as well as the characteristics outlined in our Portrait of a Graduate.

DEFINITIONS

Cell Phone- any personal device capable of cellular communication, including smartphones.

Personal Electronic Device- any non-school-issued electronic device capable of connecting to the internet, wireless networks, or Bluetooth, including: smart watches, earbuds/headphones, smart glasses, tablets, and personal laptops.

Instructional Day- the period from student arrival on campus until dismissal, including: academic classes, technical program instruction, passing times, lunch periods, restrooms, and school transportation provided during the school day.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

During the instructional day:

- Cell phones and personal electronic devices must be turned off or silenced and kept out of sight.
- Devices may not be carried in a student's hand, lap, hoodie pocket, or otherwise visible during instruction.
- Students may not use devices in classrooms, labs, restrooms, hallways, or offices unless specifically authorized under an approved exception.
- Devices may not be used during passing time or lunch unless authorized by administration for a specific purpose.
- Students are responsible for securely storing personal devices in accordance with classroom or program expectations.

RCPS strongly encourages students and families to communicate before and after the school day whenever possible.

EXCEPTIONS

Students may use a cell phone or personal electronic device when administrative discretion has deemed it necessary. This may include use for academic purposes, school-sponsored activities, instructional needs, or emergency situations. A school administrator may authorize limited use for a specific educational, safety, or communication purpose. Whenever possible, district-issued devices will be used first to meet instructional or accommodation needs.

Family Communication During the School Day

Families needing to contact students during the school day should call the Main Office at (802)773-1946. Students may also request permission to contact a parent/guardian through the Main Office when necessary.

If a student is found to be using a cell phone or prohibited electronic device without instructor permission, the following steps will be taken:

- On the first offense, the student will be required to turn the cell phone or electronic device into the front office. The parent/guardian will be notified. The device will be returned to the school at the end of the day, unless other arrangements are made with the parent.
- On the second offense and beyond, the student will be required to turn the cell phone or electronic device into the office. The parent/guardian will be notified and will be required to pick up the device.

Refusal to surrender a device when directed by staff may result in additional disciplinary consequences.

Adult (Staff and Parents/Guardians and Caregiver) Responsibilities

In partnership, staff and families are expected to:

- Consistently enforce schoolwide expectations
- Minimize instructional disruptions related to devices
- Clearly communicate classroom-specific procedures
- Ensure safety expectations are maintained in all learning environments
- Staff will refer repeated violations to the administration

TITLE I, PART A FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

(Rutland Public Schools POLICY NUMBER 7699)

Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement Policy: It is the policy of Rutland City Public Schools (District) to plan and implement effective needs- based Title I and School wide Programs, with meaningful consultation and involvement of all participating parents and family members that comply with all parent and family engagement requirements, specifically those required by federal statute. As such the LEA (Local Education Agency) is responsible for ensuring compliance with development and implementation of the following three documents:

1. LEA PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY.
2. SCHOOL-LEVEL PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE
- 2 a. HOME SCHOOL COMPACT

Definitions:

- Parent: Includes a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).
- Parent and Family Engagement (PFE): The inclusion of parents, families, schools, and communities in order to support learning and improve schools. Opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members, including those who have limited English proficiency, those who have disabilities, and those of migratory children.

Implementation:

The District will ensure the successful development and implementation of the written Parent and Family Engagement Policy, School Parent and Family Engagement Procedure, and

School-Parent Compact and will address all requirements in specific detail with review and revision on a periodic and timely basis.

Family Engagement Policy:

In order to provide all children with significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational gaps, the District receives Title I, Part A funds. This policy will outline the District's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and the ways in which the LEA will implement and support opportunities for parent and family involvement in order to improve student academic achievement.

Part I: General Requirements and Expectations

1. In order to support increased parent and family engagement to improve student academic achievement, the District will actively engage all families, while mitigating barriers to engagement.
2. The District agrees to take the following actions to involve parents and family members in the joint development of its Continuous Improvement Plans, including the support and improvement thereof:
 - a. Invite participation in the development of the plans;
 - b. Make public the drafts of the district and school plans, and seek meaningful engagement; and
 - c. Seek the approval of the Board of School Commissioners.
3. The District will include family engagement as a school wide investment for each school annually to target training, barrier mitigation for families, as part of each School wide Continuous Improvement Plan.
4. The District will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent & Family Title I, Part A Parent & Family Engagement Policy, connected with the annual Title I part A school meetings, in an effort to support:
 - a. Mitigation of barriers to greater family participation in Title I parent and family engagement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background)
 - b. The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers
 - c. Strategies to support successful school and family interactions

In order to complete this evaluation, the District will include this policy as part of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Policy Committee and actively invite in-person and written participation by families.

5. The District agrees to take the following actions to use the findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise the LEA Parent & Family Engagement Policy, if necessary:
 - a. Each school's Continuous Improvement Planning Team will analyze the input of families, following the annual meeting, and adjust their plans and engagement procedures.

- b. The Rutland City Board of School Commissioners' Policy Committee will review this policy annually, following the completion of the school level Title I, Part A meetings and meaningful engagement to consider adjustments to this policy.
6. The District and its schools will actively invite families and their participation to all schoolwide community events, conferences, and performances. Each event is an opportunity for engagement.

Part II: Building Capacity for Involvement:

To promote effective involvement of parents and support a partnership among the schools, parents, and the community in order to improve student achievement, the District will use the following strategies:

7. Provide assistance to parents of children served by the LEA in understanding the following topics:
 - a. The challenging State academic standards
 - b. State and local academic assessments
 - c. Title I, Part A requirement
 - d. How to monitor their child's progress
 - e. How to work with educators to improve their children's achievement

The District will take the followings actions in order provide this assistance to families that will allow for greater engagement:

- Virtual or phone meetings
 - Translation of materials, into the primary languages of our family's
 - Multiple avenues of communication, that meet the needs of families
 - Support and education on successful guardianship and parenting
 - Invitations to all school events
8. The District, in collaboration with local agencies, will provide materials and training, as appropriate, to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement.
 9. The District will provide professional development in improving family engagement.

PART III. Policy Adoption The District's Parent & Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with parents of children participating in Schoolwide and Title I, Part A programs. It will be reviewed annually, following each schools' Tile I, Part A meeting, and meaningful engagement.

Adopted: March 14, 2023 Supersedes Policy of 2019
 Legal Reference: [20 USC § 7801\(38\)](#), 20 U.S.C. § 631816 V.S.A § 43.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Rutland Northwest Primary School
 School Year: 2026-2027
 Revised: 8/19/2026

In order to provide all children with significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational gaps, Rutland Northwest Primary School receives Title I, Part A funds. Therefore, in accordance with Section 1116(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Rutland Northwest Primary School must develop, with the parents and family members of participating students, a written parent and family engagement procedure. This procedure will outline how this school will involve parents and family members in procedure development and build capacity for parent and family engagement in order to improve student academic achievement.

Part I: Procedure Involvement

1. Per ESSA (1116(c)(1)) Rutland Northwest Primary School will hold an annual meeting, at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, to explain the Title I requirements under ESSA, and to inform parents of their right to be involved. The Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to take the following actions:
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will hold their annual meeting on Wednesday, September 24, 2024 from 5:30-6:00.
 - This will be communicated in the Newsletter sent home leading up to the event as well as on the school Facebook page, school website, and flyers sent home with students.
 - Feedback and input will be collected in meeting minutes at the annual meeting. Parents will also have the opportunity to submit written feedback to the building principal as needed.
2. Per ESSA (1116(c)(2)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to offer a flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may use Title I funds to provide transportation, childcare, or home visits, as related to parent involvement.
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will survey families annually to determine what meeting times and structures work best and will use this information for planning future events.
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will:
 - Offer a virtual participation option for events such as Parent-Teacher Conferences.
 - Record presentations to make available to families on the website and social media.
3. Per ESSA (1116(c)(3)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs in the following ways:
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will host its Annual Title I Meeting.
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will solicit feedback from the Parent Teacher Collaborative (PTC) during monthly meetings.

4. Per ESSA (1116(c)(3)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way in the planning, review, and improvement of the School Parent & Family Engagement Policy and in the joint development of the schoolwide program plan in the following ways:
- Rutland Northwest Primary School will host its Annual Title I Meeting,
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will solicit feedback from the Parent Teacher Collaborative (PTC) during monthly meetings.

5. Per ESSA (1116(c)(4)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to provide parents of participating children the following:
- Timely information about Title I programs
 - A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used, and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standard
 - Opportunities for regular meetings for parents to make suggestions and participate in Title I Parent & Family Engagement Policy, Procedure & Compact Templates and decisions relating to the education of their children
 - Responses to these suggestions as soon as practicably possible

The school agrees to provide these in the following ways:

- Hosting the Title I Annual Meeting;
 - Providing information in the Student-Family Handbook;
 - Providing periodic updates on Title I programs and activities throughout the school year; and
 - Administering parent/family engagement surveys 3 times a year.
6. Per ESSA (1116(c)(5)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to take the following actions to submit any parent comments about the schoolwide program plan when the school makes the plan available to the LEA, if the schoolwide program plan is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children:
- Rutland Northwest Primary School is committed to developing a school wide plan that is satisfactory to all stakeholders. In the event that lingering critical feedback remains, it will be shared with the LEA.
 - Rutland Northwest Primary School will administer parent/family engagement surveys 3 times a year to provide an opportunity for feedback.

7. Per ESSA (1116(d)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to take the following actions to jointly develop with participating parents a school-parent compact, outlining how parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement:
- Host the Annual Title I Meeting at Rutland Northwest Primary School;
 - This will be communicated in the Newsletter sent home leading up to the event as well as on the school's Facebook page and website;
 - Provide information in the Student-Family Handbook; and
 - Solicit parent feedback on an annual basis.

8. Per ESSA (1116(f)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to take the following actions to provide opportunities for the informed participation of parents and family members, including providing information and school reports required under section 1111, in a format and language that parents can understand:
- We are committed to providing support to families who need access and interpretation. The school has a contracted service for translation service.

Part II: Building Capacity for Involvement

To ensure effective involvement of parents and support a partnership between the school, parents, and the community in order to improve student achievement, Rutland Northwest Primary School will use the following strategies:

9. Per ESSA (1116(e)(1)) Rutland Northwest Primary School will provide assistance to parents of children served by the school in understanding the following topics:
- The challenging State academic standards
 - State and local academic assessments
 - Title I, Part A requirements
 - How to monitor their child's progress
 - How to work with educators to improve their children's achievement

The school agrees to take the followings actions in order provide this assistance:

- Provide information in Student-Parent Handbook;
 - Host Open House;
 - Provide regular communication and reminders in the monthly newsletter;
 - Host Parent-Teacher conferences two times per year;
 - Invite families to Educational Support Team meetings to discuss academic strengths and areas of need of students;
 - Prepare and schedule special meetings, presentations, and informational sessions throughout the year as needed or requested by families; and
 - Provide translation services as needed.
10. Per ESSA (1116(e)(2)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to provide materials and training, such as literacy and technology workshops, as appropriate, to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement:
- Based on identified needs, Rutland Northwest Primary School will hold a meeting to provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement.
11. Per ESSA (1116(e)(3)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the following areas:
- The value of contributions of parents;
 - How to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners;
 - How to implement and coordinate parent programs; and

- How to build ties between parents and school.

The school agrees to take the following actions to provide this support:

- Facilitate ongoing conversations with faculty and staff to increase parental involvement;
- Distribute monthly newsletters to highlight school activities and events for parents/families;
- Information in the Family Handbook to highlight the expectations and procedures for academic, social, and emotional well-being of students;
- Host Parent Teacher Conferences two times a year; and
- Report out on student progress twice a year through progress reports

12. Per ESSA (1116(e)(4)) Rutland Northwest Primary School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate Title I parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children. The school agrees to take the following actions to coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs:

- Introduction to Kindergarten prior to the start of the school year; and
- Summer programs to support early learners

13. Per ESSA (1116(e)(5)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

- Provide information in the Student-Parent Handbook;
- Host Open House;
- Provide regular communication and reminders in the monthly newsletter; and
- Providing support and translation services as needed

14. Per ESSA (1116(e)(14)) Rutland Northwest Primary School agrees to take the following actions to provide other reasonable support for parent involvement activities, as parents may request:

- Host monthly Parent Teacher Collaborative (PTC) meetings to support collaboration and encourage families to provide feedback; and
- Based on identified needs, Rutland Northwest Primary School will provide reasonable support for parent involvement activities.

Additional Building Capacity Options - N/A

PART III. Procedure Approval

This School Parent & Family Engagement procedure has been developed jointly with, and agreed on, with parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs.

This procedure was adopted by the Rutland Northwest Primary School on [DATE] and will be in effect for the period of the 2025-2026 school year. The Title I School will distribute this procedure to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before 10/1/2025.

Corey Smith

(Signature of Authorized Official)

8/19/2026

HOME-SCHOOL COMPACT

Rutland Northwest Primary School School-Parent Compact

Rutland Northwest Primary School
Corey Smith, Principal
1-802-726-1776
www.northwest.rutlandcitypublicschools.org
Last Revised: 8/19/2026

What is a School-Parent Compact?

Per ESSA (1116(d)) the School-Parent Compact is a written document designed to build partnerships, be jointly developed with parents and families of Title I Participating students that

clearly outlines the goals and shared responsibilities of students, parents, and the entire school staff in improved student academic achievement.

Our Goals

District Goals

- Teaching and Learning is structured to provide all students access to high-quality instruction and standards-based content that clearly identifies student learning and supports student growth toward Portrait of a Graduate traits.
- Embody a culture of well-being through practices and infrastructure to enhance the physical, social, and emotional health of our students and staff, contributing to the vitality of our school community.
- Secure, cultivate, and sustain resources to empower and uplift a diverse community, fostering an environment of adaptability, collaboration, and critical thinking.

School Goals

- Northwest Primary School is committed to providing all students with access to high quality, research-based, standards-aligned Tier 1 programming and instruction, supported by an MTSS system that tracks progress and delivers additional services for students needing support beyond Tier 1.
- Northwest Primary School supports students in making healthy lifestyle choices and fostering their physical, social, and emotional well-being through structures designed to promote success for all learners.

Shared Responsibility

Rutland Northwest Primary School and the parents of students participating in activities, services, and programs agree this compact outlines how the parents, the school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve high standards.

Teachers and Staff will:

- Maintain a safe, orderly environment most conducive to teaching and learning;
- Treat all children and their families with respect and dignity;
- Make inclusive connections with families of all configurations and makeups;
- Enact direct communication through orientations, open houses, and parent-teacher meetings;
- Encourage families to contact us by telephone or email at school;
- Provide regular progress reports regarding student achievement;
- Assign meaningful and productive homework lessons according to school policy; and
- Insist upon high expectations for student performance in and out of the classroom.

Families will:

- Make every effort to learn more about our school and participate in their child's education by attending activities such as parent teacher conferences, open house, and other events;
- Treat school personnel with respect and dignity;
- Support the school's academic efforts at home by supervising the completion of homework, encouraging independent reading, and monitoring the viewing of TV and video games, especially on school nights;
- Guarantee regular attendance, promptness, and readiness for school;
- Minimize medical/dental appointments and family vacations taken during school days;
- Contact teachers by telephone or email at school whenever appropriate, especially when students are absent; and
- Volunteer in the classroom and/or school or at home in a way that supports their child's education, and celebrate student performance in and out of the classroom.

Students will:

- Develop the RCPS Portrait of a Graduate character traits: Adaptability, Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Empathy, Integrity, and Wellness;
- Strive to do their best in school and to conduct themselves with dignity and respect at all times; and
- Follow rules and guidelines regarding academic performance and proper personal conduct.

Building Partnerships

Rutland Northwest Primary School is committed to building positive relationships. We hold the following events to build school-family partnerships:

- Title I Annual Meeting
- Parent-Teacher Conferences 2x/year
- Open House
- CIP Planning Meeting

Communication

Rutland Northwest Primary School acknowledges the importance of faculty and staff working together with families and maintaining open communication. Rutland Northwest Primary School will communicate with families in a variety of ways including, but not limited to:

- Open House
- Parent-Teacher Conferences 2x/year
- Monthly Newsletters

Rutland Northwest Primary School also encourages families to reach out to the school and to teachers via email or phone.

Jointly Developed

Rutland Northwest Primary School holds an annual meeting to review the School-Parent Compact and revise in partnership with families.

This School-Parent Compact has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs on [DATE] at Rutland Northwest Primary School.

This compact was approved by the Rutland Northwest Primary School on [DATE] and will be in effect for the period of the 2025-2026 School Year. The Title I School will distribute this procedure to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 1, 2026.

Corey Smith

(Signature of Authorized Official)

8/19/2026



80 Pierpoint Ave.
Rutland, VT 05701
802-786-1776

2025-2026 Student/Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Parent/Guardian Signature Requested

The daily operations of the school require the cooperation and collaboration of families and school personnel to provide our children with a safe, efficient educational setting. This requires effort on the part of all, and we appreciate you taking the time to read this handbook.

We are offering parents/guardians two options: The handbook may be read online at www.northwest.rutlandcitypublicschools.org, or a hard copy may be requested. In either case, we ask that once you have read the handbook, please sign and return this page to school with your child. Thank you.

Please read and check one of the following:

- ☐ I have read the Family & Student Handbook online. If I have questions, I will bring them to the attention of my child's teacher or school administration.
- ☐ Please send home a hard copy with my child.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name(s): _____

Grade(s): _____ Teacher(s): _____

Please sign and return this page to school with your child. Thank-you