A. Ward Spaulding School

Student and Family Handbook 2026-2027

945 Mountain Road
West Suffield, Connecticut 06093
860-668-3826

Gina D. Olearczyk
Principal
golearczyk@suffield.org

Nikki Kupec
Assistant Principal
nkupec@suffield.org

Spaulding Stars care through respect, responsibility and kindness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS 6
KINDNESS STATEMENT 6
PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE 7
PREFACE 9
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION 10
EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT 10
SPAULDING SCHOOL STAFF 10
SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDAR 11
2026-2027 PTO 12
SCHOOL HOURS: 13
ADMISSIONS/PLACEMENT 13
ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS 14
ASBESTOS 17
ATTENDANCE 17
Absence 17
Excused Absence 18
Unexcused Absence 18
Truancy 19
Chronic Absenteeism: 19
Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students from School 19
Tardiness 19
Automated Phone Messaging System 20
BOARD OF EDUCATION 20
CONNECTICUT SCHOOL CLIMATE 21
School Climate 21
Reporting Challenging Behavior and Bullying 22
Dangerous Weapons and Instruments 22
Harassment 22
Hazing 23
Sexual Harassment 23
BUS TRANSPORTATION RULES AND DISCIPLINE 24
CAFETERIA – SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH 26

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION 28
CHEATING/PLAGIARISM 28
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT 29
CLASS PLACEMENT 29
CODE OF CONDUCT 30
Procedures for Teaching Behavior Expectations 30
Dress Code 30
Playscape Rules and Procedures 31
Smoking 31
Substance Abuse 31
Discipline 32
CONTACTING TEACHERS 32
DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AED's) 32
DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS AND POSTING ON WEBSITE 32
DISTRICT-PROVIDED PERSONAL LEARNING DEVICES 33
EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION 34
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS 34
FACILITIES 34
FEES/OBLIGATIONS 34
FIELD TRIPS 35
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE 35
FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS 35
FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS 35
FOOD ALLERGIES 35
FUND-RAISING 37
GREEN CLEANING PROGRAMS 37
HEALTH SERVICES 37
Administration of Medication 38
Communicable/Infectious Diseases 39
Disabilities 39
Emergency Medical Treatment 39
Head Lice (Pediculosis) 40
Health Records 40
Homebound Instruction 40

Homeless Students 40
Immunizations 41
Physical Examinations 41
HOMEWORK 41
INDOOR AIR QUALITY 42
INSURANCE 42
LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE 42
LOST AND FOUND 42
MAGNET SCHOOLS 43
MANDATED REPORTERS/MANDATED REPORTING 43
MIGRANT STUDENTS 43
OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT 43
PARENT CONFERENCES 43
PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS 44
Parent Portal Information System 44
Parent Requested Observations 44
PESTICIDE APPLICATION 44
PETS AND ANIMALS IN SCHOOL 45
PHOTOGRAPHS 45
PHYSICAL EXERCISE 45
PROMOTION/RETENTION/PLACEMENT 45
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT 46
PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE 46
RECORDING OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES 46
REPORT CARDS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES 46
SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION 47
SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES 47
SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS 47
SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY 48
SEARCH AND SEIZURE 48
SECLUSION/RESTRAINT, USE OF 49
SEXUAL HARASSMENT 49
SNACKS 50
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING 50

STUDENT SAFETY **50**
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES **52**
Paraeducator Support and Duty Clerks 53
American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 53
STUDENT RECORDS **54**
STUDENT/TEACHER CONTACT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY **56**
SUICIDE PREVENTION **57**
SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY/NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA) **57**
TEACHER AND PARAEDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS **58**
TECHNOLOGY **58**
Computer Resources 58
Electronic Devices and Games 58
Responsible Use Policy 59
TEXTBOOK/DEVICE CARE AND OBLIGATIONS **60**
TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES **60**
TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT **60**
TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS **60**
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES **60**
VACATIONS **60**
VIDEO RECORDING ON THE BUS **60**
VISITORS TO SPAULDING SCHOOL **61**
WELLNESS **61**

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Mission of the Suffield Public Schools is to prepare all students with the knowledge, skills, and attributes required for success in a rapidly-changing world.

In pursuit of this Mission, we believe that:

- when we address students' diverse academic, social, emotional and physical needs, all will learn;
- all students need equitable access to appropriate resources and opportunities to excel;
- multiple measures of student learning are required to drive continuous improvement;
- students and adults thrive in a safe and secure learning environment characterized by responsibility, fairness, respect, and civility;
- highly-effective teachers and instructional leaders who engage students in rigorous and challenging experiences are the keys to student success;
- an excellent district staff supports success in every classroom, facility, and setting;
- partnerships, collaboration, and communication with families and the community are vital to our mission.

KINDNESS STATEMENT

At Suffield Public Schools, kindness, respect, and inclusion are essential values.
Every student and staff member deserves to feel safe, supported, and valued—at school, on the bus, at school events, and online. We are dedicated to creating a positive learning environment.

We do not accept:

- **Mean Behavior-** of any kind - including but not limited to: physical, verbal, social, written, gesture, or electronic act.
- **Unkind words or actions**—including disrespect, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors.
- **Discrimination or racism**—such as hate speech, slurs, or exclusion based on race, identity, culture, disability, or background.
- **Intentional hurtful behavior**, such as spreading rumors, harassment, physical aggression, threats, or excluding others.

How We Promote a Positive School Climate:
To support kindness and respect, we use proactive strategies that help students learn, connect, and grow. These include:

- Social-emotional learning programs and character education
- School-wide kindness campaigns and student-led initiatives
- Classroom conversations about empathy, inclusion, and responsible decision-making
- Ongoing staff training to ensure a safe, respectful learning environment
- Opportunities for student voice, leadership, and peer mentoring

You are expected to:

- Treat others with dignity—in class, at lunch, recess, on the bus, at events, and electronically
- Speak up if you witness mean behavior, bullying, hate speech, or unkind behavior
- Support your classmates and help create a culture where everyone feels welcome and safe

If Harmful Behavior Occurs:
We take all incidents of mean behavior, bullying, harassment, or disrespect seriously. Whether in person or electronic, actions that harm our school community result in appropriate and timely responses.

Disciplinary Measures May Include:

- Referral to administration and documentation in school records
- Loss of privileges during the school day, suspension from transportation, extracurricular activities, or school events
- Suspension for serious or repeated behaviors

Restorative Approaches May Include:

- Restorative conversations or meetings to repair harm and rebuild trust
- Reflective assignments or community service that promote accountability
- Peer mediation or conflict resolution when appropriate

Mean behavior that is severe, persistent, or pervasive will be subject to formal challenging behavior investigations. All expectations apply on campus, during school-sponsored events, on transportation, and in digital spaces.

SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE
Suffield Public School Graduate

In 2022, the SPS Board of Education developed and adopted the Portrait of a Graduate. This was in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including:

- Parents
- Families
- Community members
- Educators
- Students
- SPS leadership

The adoption of the Portrait of the Graduate acknowledges that in our rapidly changing world, education needs to evolve to fulfill our mission of supporting student success in school and in life. Portrait of a

Graduate prioritizes the development of skills that will empower students to be productive citizens of a global community and successful in the workforce of the future.

Every graduate should be:

- A Clear Communicator who makes meaning and expresses thinking in a multiplicity of ways
    - To do so, the communicator demonstrates the following skills or attributes:
        - Listening
        - Empathy
        - Respect
        - Clarity
        - Fluency
        - Concision
        - Command of multiple modalities
        - Speaking and writing for multiple purposes and audiences

- A Creative and Critical Thinker who generates and assesses solutions for a wide variety of problems.
    - To do so, the thinker demonstrates the following skills or attributes:
        - Curiosity
        - Questioning
        - Reflection
        - Analysis
        - Research
        - Decision Making
        - Strategic and flexible thinking
        - Persistence in exploring options, generating hypotheses and revising and refining solutions

- A Collegial Collaborator who values partnership and works effectively with others.
    - To do so, the thinker demonstrates the following skills or attributes:
        - Adaptability
        - Self-awareness
        - Facilitative leadership
        - Empathy and respect for others
        - Ability to compromise and resolve conflicts
        - Tolerance and openness to people and ideas

- A Civic-Minded Contributor who is an active participant in the life and spirit of the home, the community, the society, and the world.
    - To do so, the thinker demonstrates the following skills or attributes:
        - Trustworthiness

        - Kindness
        - Compassion
        - Openness to feedback
        - Willingness to help others
        - An ethical orientation- honesty, integrity, impartiality and fairness

- A Conscientious Learner who has cognitive processes and skills that help them to plan, monitor, implement and achieve their goals.
    - To do so, the thinker demonstrates the following skills or attributes:
        - Adaptability
        - Self-efficacy
        - Organization
        - Self-advocacy
        - Independence
        - Self-regulation
        - Self-knowledge
        - Resourcefulness

PREFACE

This *A. Ward Spaulding School Student/Family Handbook* serves to provide you with helpful information regarding procedures and practices specific to A. Ward Spaulding Elementary School. The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents/guardians regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice. This handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications. Parents, guardians, and students are encouraged to regularly consult the District website for the latest information and updates. For more information on the Board policies outlined or referenced in this handbook, please visit https://www.suffield.org/

Our school operates more coherently and smoothly if students, staff, and parents understand and adhere to the guidelines contained in this handbook. Our school personnel are dedicated to providing the best possible educational programs for your children. This can only be accomplished by fostering a positive and sincere home-school relationship. We are available to answer any questions that you may have relative to the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, and we welcome your constructive comments as we work with you and your child during the 2026-2027 School Year.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. Suffield Public Schools will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Programs and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law. Dr. Diana Kelley is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Dr. Diana Kelley
Director of Special Services
Suffield Public Schools
350 Mountain Road
Suffield, CT 06078
860-668-3800

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Suffield schools recognize and accept the need to prepare students to live and work productively in an increasingly diverse society. This is an integral part of the school system's commitment to offer an educational program of excellence, which includes teaching students awareness and understanding of the diverse cultures and heritages that form our society. The school will not tolerate student behavior which insults, degrades or stereotypes any race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical or mental condition or ethnic group.

SPAULDING SCHOOL STAFF

The staff directory can be found on the Spaulding website under the tab Faculty and Staff Directory.
https://www.suffield.org/

SCHOOL DISTRICT CALENDAR

SUFFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2026-2027 District Calendar

BOE Approved 02.03.2025

21 New Teacher Orientation
24 PD Day / Convocation
25 PD Day
26 Teacher Work Day
27 Student First Day of School

AUGUST (3 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

FEBRUARY (17 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

15 No School - Presidents Day
16 No School - Winter Break
17 No School - PD Day

7 No School - Labor Day

SEPTEMBER (21 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

MARCH (22 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

2 Early Dismissal - Afternoon and Evening Conferences
4 Early Dismissal - Afternoon and Evening Conferences
25 Early Dismissal - PD Day
26 No School - Good Friday

9 Early Dismissal - PD Day
12 No School - Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples Day

OCTOBER (21 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL (17 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

12-16 No School - Spring Break

3 No School - PD Day
10 Evening Conferences
12 Early Dismissal - Afternoon and Evening Conferences
13 Early Dismissal - Afternoon Conferences
25 Early Dismissal
26-27 No School - Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER (18 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

MAY(20 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

31 No School - Memorial Day

8 Early Dismissal - PD Day
23 Early Dismissal
24-31 No School - Winter Break

DECEMBER (17 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JUNE (7 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

9 Early Dismissal Tentative Last Day of School
10 Teacher Work Day
12 Graduation
19 Juneteenth

1 No School - Winter Break
18 No School - MLK Jr. Day
19-22 Early Release - High School only (exams)
26 Early Dismissal - PD Day

JANUARY (19 Days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Key:
- All Other Important Events
- No School Office Closed
- No School
- Graduation

188 Teacher Days / **182** Student Days
School closing days added up to **June 16** before consideration to reduce April vacation.

2026-2027 Suffield Elementary PTO

Board Members	
Title	**Name**
Co-President	Nicole Thorogood
Co-President & Grants	Anna-Kristin Daub-Murphy
Co-Vice President/Fundraising Chair	Paige Barber
Co-Vice President/Fundraising Chair	Melissa Bard
Secretary	Erica Boucher
Treasurer	Chad Lemmens
Accounts Receivable	Kayla Nadeau
Accounts Payable	Liz Couchon
You can contact the board at the following: suffieldpto19@gmail.com	

Visit us on Facebook at Suffield Elementary PTO!

SCHOOL HOURS

Office Hours: **7:30 AM – 4:00 PM**

School Telephone Number: (860) 668-3826
School Fax Number: (860) 668-3087
District/School Website: www.suffield.org

School Hours: **8:35 AM – 3:15 PM**
(Students may be dropped off beginning at 8:20 a.m., when school personnel are scheduled to begin supervising children.)

Half Days/Early Dismissal: **8:35 AM – 11:50 AM**

Delayed Openings: **10:35 AM – 3:15 PM**
(Students may be dropped off beginning at 10:20 a.m., when school personnel are scheduled to begin supervising children.)

Late Openings, School Cancellations, or Early Closings

Late openings, cancellations, or early closings of school due to inclement weather are communicated in real time through our automated messaging system. Up-to-the-minute emails, text messages, and phone calls are sent to all parents/guardians as soon as a decision has been made by the Superintendent of Schools.

If it becomes necessary to close school early, an automated message will be sent as soon as this decision is made. We suggest that you check your email or text messages when a dramatic weather change occurs during the school day. We request that parents/guardians do not contact the main office or the central administration offices unless it is absolutely necessary, as we must keep our telephone lines free to have the ability to communicate as needed. ***If it becomes necessary to close school early, all after-school activities, including the Spaulding After-School Program, are canceled.*** Please discuss with your child a plan of what to do in the event of an unscheduled early release day.

ADMISSIONS/PLACEMENT

Parents/guardians of preschool students who will be five (5) years of age by September 1st of any school year or earlier are expected to register their child for kindergarten. Parents/guardians of kindergarten-aged children who plan on holding their child back from entering kindergarten should contact the principal.

A student seeking enrollment in A. Ward Spaulding School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, or private school attendance should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level. Non-residents may attend school on a tuition basis provided space is available. Non-resident students from other school districts within the state (districts in the Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, and New London regions) who apply pursuant to Board of Education regulations, may enroll in particular programs or schools within the district on a space available basis, without payment of tuition, as part of the inter-district public school attendance program

called Open Choice. The Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) will determine which school districts are in close enough proximity to make transportation feasible.

Completion of immunization and health assessments are required prior to a child's attendance in school, but are not prerequisites for enrolling a child who resides in the District and is of appropriate age to attend school.

In order to determine a child's eligibility for ESL or bilingual programs, parents/guardians of all new students enrolling for the first term and all re-enrolling students who have not previously attended public school in Connecticut must complete a Home Language Survey. The student, after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

Parents/guardians of students attending Suffield schools have the option to enroll their child(ren) in a magnet school in which Suffield is a nonparticipating district, if the magnet school has unused student capacity. The District will pay the tuition charge. This does not include tuition for a preschool magnet program.

ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS

A safe and secure school environment for students, staff, and families is of paramount importance at A. Ward Spaulding School. The following safety precautions ensure safety for everyone.

Arrival occurs from 8:20 - 8:35 a.m. School begins promptly at 8:35 a.m.

Bus Arrival:

1. Buses will enter Spaulding School using the East entrance and take an immediate RIGHT, proceeding into the loop in front of the school.

2. 4-6 buses will enter the loop by the main entrance to unload students. Once parked and lights are flashing students will disembark buses.

3. Staff will greet students as they disembark and supervise students as they enter the main entrance of the building.

4. Students will proceed directly to classroom - staff will help students who need assistance getting to correct hallway or classroom.

Bus Pick Up:

1. Buses will enter Spaulding School using the East entrance and take an immediate RIGHT, proceeding into the loop in front of the school.

2. 4-6 buses will enter loop by main entrance to load students.

3. A staff member will lead students out of the building and walk students to board their bus.

4. Once buses are loaded, they will exit and the next group of buses will pull up to commence boarding. This will continue until all buses are loaded.

PARENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP:

Parent Drop Off: * Students must remain in cars until 8:20 a.m., at which time Spaulding staff will be available to welcome and supervise students. *

1. Parents will enter Spaulding School using the West entrance and take an immediate RIGHT into the parking lot.

2. Follow the arrows and proceed straight to the end of the row and take a LEFT and another LEFT to stage, using two lanes to form a double line, before entering loop (Line of parking next to fence/field).

3. 12 cars will enter the loop by the entrance to unload students, using only the right lane. Staff members will greet students and help them out of cars. Students should exit out of the passenger side of the car.

4. Continue around loop when directed and exit onto Mountain Road.

Late Arrivals (after 8:35 a.m.): Families are reminded of the importance of students arriving on time (and avoiding early pick-up) and receiving the benefit of a full day of school. Valuable, community-building activities and classroom routines occur at the beginning and end of each day to provide students with a predictable structure to promote school success. When a late arrival is unavoidable, please adhere to the following procedures:

1. Students who arrive after the 8:35 a.m. bell must be signed in by a parent/guardian at our front lobby/foyer using the East entrance.

2. Parents/guardians may temporarily park their car in the East circle to walk their child to our front lobby/foyer and sign their child in.

3. Parents/guardians requiring longer term parking must park in the West parking lot and walk their child to the East entrance to sign in their child.

4. The tardy is documented in PowerSchool.

5. Chronic tardiness has an adverse effect on a child's educational progress. In such cases, administration will schedule a meeting to partner with families demonstrating a pattern of repeated tardiness to support timely arrivals and student learning.

Parent Pick Up:

1. Parents will enter Spaulding School using the West entrance and take an immediate RIGHT into the parking lot. This MUST be done to check in and ensure your student is brought out at the appropriate time.

2. Follow the arrows and proceed straight to the end of the row and take a LEFT and another LEFT to stage, using two lanes to form a double line, before entering the loop (Line of parking next to fence/field) - Have Pik My Kid app or photo ID visible for staff.

3. 12 cars will enter the loop by the main entrance, using only the right lane. Staff members will walk students out the main entrance and escort students to their cars.

4. Once cars are loaded they will continue around the loop and exit left or right onto Mountain Road. If you need additional time to load, please pull forward and to the side. Do NOT leave your vehicle as staff will walk students to your vehicle.

5. This process will continue with 12 cars at a time until all students are picked up.

Early Dismissals: Parents are again reminded of the benefit students receive from a full day of school, and as such, early pick-ups are strongly discouraged. Students should only be dismissed early under ***rare, unavoidable*** occurrences. When an early dismissal is unavoidable, please adhere to the following procedures:

1. Students being picked up before 3:00 p.m. must be signed out by a parent/guardian at our front lobby/foyer using the East entrance. Students being picked up at 3:00 p.m. or later must follow the regular parent pick up procedure.

2. If arriving to pick up a child before 2:30 parents/guardians may temporarily park their car in the East circle to enter our front lobby/foyer and sign their child out. If later than 2:30, parents will need to park in the West parking lot. The loop MUST be clear of all vehicles by 2:30 each day.

3. Parents/guardians requiring longer term parking must park in the West parking lot and use the East entrance to sign their child out.

4. The early dismissal should be noted in PikMyKid and is documented in PowerSchool.

5. As with chronic tardiness, children who consistently leave early and miss the important closure to the school day suffer an educational disadvantage compared to those who receive the benefit of a full school day. In such cases, administration will schedule a meeting to partner with families demonstrating a pattern of repeated early dismissals to support student learning.

Rideshare and Third-Party Vehicles: The Board of Education understands that families may require the need for rideshares. If parents/guardians allow their child(ren) to be dropped off or picked up at school by a ridesharing service, it is with the express acknowledgment that the District and its employees have no responsibility for their decision to use such a service and have no responsibility of liability to such parents/guardians or their child(ren) related to the ridesharing service. If a parent/guardian is requesting that their child take a rideshare, they are required to provide the school with written communication prior to arrival/dismissal.

ASBESTOS

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

ATTENDANCE

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. Students are required to attend school on a regular basis.

Absence means an excused absence or an unexcused absence.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion will always be considered absent.

The parent or person having control of a child shall have the option of waiting to send the child to school until the child is six or seven years of age, upon signing an option form at the school district offices.

A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10 percent of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a "chronically absent child." The child will be subject to review by the district and/or the school attendance team.

All children attending district schools must obtain the required immunizations unless they have medical contraindications. This obligation may be waived for homeless students.

A student must remain in school until age 18, unless he/she graduates or gets written consent from a parent/guardian on a district provided form to leave school at age 17.

Absence

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends, and school vacation periods. When a parent/guardian determines that an absence is necessary, he/she is requested to record this absence through SafeArrival or contact the school via telephone as soon as possible. If an absence is not reported by 10:30, an automated communication will be sent out to confirm the student's absence.

If this is not possible on the day of absence, the parent/guardian is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student's return. The student should submit the excuse directly to the main office. Parents/guardians should contact the classroom teacher in order to request missed work or homework assignments for the student who must be out several days.

Excused Absence

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:

A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials.

B. Students receive an excused absence for the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:

1. Student illness, verified by a licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence.
2. Student's observance of a religious holiday.
3. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
4. Court appearances which are mandated. (documentation required)
5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends.
6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines.
7. Additional 10 days for children of military service members.

The responsibility for makeup of work lies with the student, not the teacher. The typical time limit for make-up work is one school day for each day of absence.

Unexcused Absence

Unexcused absences are those which do not fall under any of the excused absences. Students who have unexcused absences may be denied makeup privileges. Such absences may also be reflected in the student's final grade.

Absences which are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from the definitions highlighted above.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents/guardians informed within the limit of its capability, parents/guardians and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards issued quarterly. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to contact the teachers and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

Truancy

Truancy is defined by statute as absence(s) from school without the knowledge or approval of parents/guardians and/or school officials. A student age five to eighteen** inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered a truant. When students accumulate more than nine absences, we will increase our efforts to partner with our families to ensure regular and punctual student attendance.

Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. School staff are mandated by the state to report excessive absences or patterns of concern.

Information about truancy will also be posted in the annual district report cards required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Chronic Absenteeism

A student whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during the school year is considered to be a "chronically absent child." This 10% absence rate includes both *excused* and *unexcused* absences. Students who are chronically absent will be subject to review by A. Ward Spaulding's attendance team. As a school, we are obligated by both state statute and Suffield Board of Education policy to communicate with families about attendance criteria each month, as well as to reach out to families with support and referrals to community resources. The District will also collect and analyze data on student attendance, truancy and chronic absenteeism for students with disabilities.

Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students from School

Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents or guardians and school administration. In the event it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent/guardian should send a written request to the office or update dismissal preferences in PikMyKid. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent/guardian. Children of single-parent families will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is identified as such in the school records, unless prior arrangements have been made with the school. Arrangements should be made with the building administrator on the parent or guardian to pick up the student in the school office. No student may be released in the custody of any individual, not the parent or guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears on the list maintained by the school's principal as authorized to obtain the release of students.

If someone other than a parent/guardian picks up the student, the person appearing in the school office should bring a note of identification from the parent/guardian.

Tardiness

Students who are not in their classroom by 8:35 A.M. are identified as tardy. Repeated tardies at the K-2 level result in students missing important opportunities for social and emotional development such as Morning Meeting as well as academic interventions. All attempts should be made to avoid tardiness. A student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant.

AUTOMATED PHONE MESSAGING SYSTEMS

The Suffield Public School system uses School Messenger, an automated phone messaging system, which gives school administrators the ability to easily contact parents/guardians immediately of news that needs to be communicated. Administrators have the ability to send personally prerecorded messages to the entire school community, or they can tailor transmissions to smaller groups, when needed. The system allows the District to program up to three numbers for each parent/guardian of a District student. (home phone, work phone, cell). Such calls are permitted without prior consent if limited to notice of emergency items, such as weather-related closures, issues of student safety and health, and threats of imminent danger. Parental consent will be sought when the messaging system will be used for other informational items.

Suffield Public Schools also utilizes a student absence reporting system called SafeArrival. This system reduces the time it takes to verify student attendance and makes it easy to report your child's absences. You can manage all of your children's absences and view the past 30 days of School Messenger communications under one login.

All absences must be entered by 9:30 AM each day. You can record this absence on SafeArrival or by calling the main office. We will continue to use Pikmykid as our system for dismissal changes including announcing early dismissals. SafeArrival is solely for the use of reporting absences, all dismissal changes will continue to go through Pikmykid.

With SafeArrival, you are asked to report your child's absence in advance by downloading the SM Home App, utilizing the website (https://go.schoolmessenger.com), or calling the toll-free number (1-844-778-4091). These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time for up to 3 days at a time. Any more than 3 consecutive days you will have to talk directly with the main office. We will use the SchoolMessenger Communicate automated notification system to contact parents whose child is absent when the absence was not reported in advance. If you report your child's absence in advance using the SafeArrival toll-free number, website or mobile app, you will NOT receive these notifications. Calls from A. Ward Spaulding School will start daily at 10:30am.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The members of the Suffield Board of Education are:

Maureen Sattan, Chair	Debra Dudack, Vice Chair	Gianna Rossi, Secretary
Melissa Finnigan	Brian Fry	Geert (James) Mol
Dustin Rose	Gregory Sparzo	Samuel Toskin

For more information on the Board policies outlined or referenced in this handbook please visit www.suffield.org under the District tab. For your convenience, additional school/District information and forms can be found on the District website. Parents and students are encouraged to regularly consult the District website for the latest information and updates.

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Suffield Board of Education holds regular business meetings which will be posted on the District's website www.suffield.org. Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend.

CONNECTICUT SCHOOL CLIMATE

Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Such behavior is defined as unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

Challenging behavior means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

The School Climate Specialist is responsible for taking a report of "challenging" behaviors and investigating the complaint, implementing interventions including restorative practices, leading the school climate committee, and leading the implementation of the school improvement plan.

The Connecticut School Climate Standards promote a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships. ***Restorative practices*** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.

The School Climate Coordinator for this District is:	**The School Climate Specialist for Spaulding Elementary School is:**
Dr. Laura Norbut Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Suffield Public Schools 350 Mountain Road Suffield, CT 06078 (860) 668-3800	Nikki Kupec, Assistant Principal Spaulding Elementary School 945 Mountain Road Suffield, CT 06078 (860) 668-3830

School Climate

School climate means the quality and character of school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

In order for teaching and learning to occur there must be a positive climate in which students appreciate and accept individual differences and behave responsibly toward others. Students are encouraged to report challenging behavior, bullying, discrimination or harassment to any faculty member or administrator and may request anonymity. Please refer to the **Board Policy #5131.911 School Climate** for details.

Reporting Challenging Behavior and Bullying

All school employees are required to report any alleged challenging behavior or bullying incident. Students and parents or guardians of students enrolled in school may also report such incidents using the **Challenging Behavior Reporting Form**, available electronically or in hard copy. Reports should include details such as the date, location, a description of the incident, and any known witnesses. Please refer to the **Board Policy #5131.911 School Climate** for details.

Dangerous Weapons and Instruments

No guns, knives, or any other objects, including martial arts weapons and facsimiles of weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution, as well as, appropriate disciplinary action. Any student found to possess a weapon on school grounds or during a school-activity will be expelled from school.

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. Such readmission is at the discretion of the Board of Education (unless the Board has delegated authority for readmission decisions to the Superintendent.) The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.

Harassment

Every student has the right to feel safe, valued, and comfortable in school. The behavior of another should never make a student feel afraid or embarrassed because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or any disability they may have. The District has zero tolerance for harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Parents/guardians are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher, staff member, or administration. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, the Board of Education will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

A student who believes that he/she has been harassed is encouraged to report the incident to a teacher, staff member, or administration. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

Hazing Activities

Hazing, bullying or abuse of students or staff will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in an act that injures, degrades or disgraces another student or staff member, disrupts the educational process, or

interferes with a student's opportunity to obtain an education shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the Suffield Board of Education that any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited, whether by students, district employees, board members, parents, vendors, contracted individuals, volunteers, or the public. The aforementioned parties are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of students. Those who engage in conduct prohibited by this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall develop Administrative Regulations implementing this Policy.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including, but not limited to:

1. insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct;
2. threats or suggestions that a student's submission to, or rejection of, unwelcome conduct will in any way influence a decision regarding that student;
3. conduct of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with the student's learning or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment — such as the display in the educational setting of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

It is the express policy of the Suffield Board of Education to encourage victims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment to report such claims. Students are encouraged to promptly report complaints of sex discrimination or sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator for the Suffield Public Schools is:
Dr. Diana Kelley, Director of Special Services
Suffield Public Schools
350 Mountain Road
Suffield, CT 06078
860-668-3800

The Title IX Officer for Spaulding School is:
Gina Olearczyk, Principal
A. Ward Spaulding School
945 Mountain Road
Suffield, CT 06093
860- 668-3826

The district will investigate such complaints promptly and will take corrective action where appropriate. The district will maintain confidentiality to the extent appropriate. The district will not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment

or sex discrimination. Any such reprisals or retaliation will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator.

The school district shall provide staff development for district administrators and annually distribute this Policy and the implementing Administrative Regulations to staff and students in an effort to maintain an environment free of sexual harassment and sex discrimination.

BUS TRANSPORTATION RULES AND DISCIPLINE

We recognize there is shared responsibility for bus safety between bus drivers, students, parents, teachers, and school administration. By signing off on this handbook parents/guardians acknowledge their understanding of the following expectations.

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Bus drivers enforce state law and rules adopted by the Suffield Board of Education for the safe transportation of all children. Parents/guardians are expected to be courteous and respectful of the bus driver, monitor and other students at all times. If there is a concern it should be directed to the bus company or school district to address.

Outlined below is the general plan for consequences for violations of expected bus behavior:

1. The driver reminds the student of expected behavior and conferences with the student after other students have exited the bus or prior to the student exiting the bus at home.

2. The driver completes a School Bus Conduct Referral which is sent to the appropriate school office. Upon receipt of the report the student will meet with an administrator for a conference and parents will be notified.

3. Repeated Bus Conduct Notices will lead to increased consequences and may ultimately lead to loss of bus privileges for a specific number of days.

4. If for any reason a majority of students riding a particular bus need additional support to make the bus ride safe, students will be assigned a seat by school administration in collaboration with the bus driver. These seats will be temporary until it is determined that students can safely return to choosing their own seats.

NOTE: If bus privileges are suspended, families must arrange their own transportation to and from school. Additional referrals may result in removal from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

Disciplinary sanctions and changes in transportation for a student with a disability shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Parents/guardians are reminded that prior to bus pick up and upon drop off, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure the safety of the child. We urge parents/guardians to please review the following bus guidelines rules with your children:

WAITING FOR THE BUS

- Be at the bus stop on time.
- Wait on the sidewalk, in a driveway, or any safe area off the road.
- Be considerate of others at the bus stop.

BOARDING THE BUS

- Wait until the bus comes to a full stop before walking toward the bus to board.
- Board the bus in an orderly manner (single line one behind the other; safe hands and feet).
- Go directly to a seat and sit down. Remain seated.
- Under no circumstances are parents/guardians allowed to board the bus.

WHILE ON THE BUS: STUDENT PLEDGE OF EXPECTED BUS BEHAVIOR:

I agree to ride the bus safely.

DO stay seated (seat to seat, back to back)

DO NOT stand or leave seat while bus is in motion

DO stay in the same seat for the entire bus ride

DO NOT change seats even when bus is not moving

DO keep aisles free of backpacks, instruments, feet

I agree to follow all bus rules and be responsible.

DO keep hands and feet to myself

DO NOT hit, kick, spit, push or shove others

DO use a quiet voice

DO NOT distract the driver

DO sit in assigned seats if necessary

DO NOT touch or play with emergency door or equipment

I agree to treat the bus, the driver, and all passengers with kindness and respect.

DO respect bus property

DO NOT damage or write on seats or other parts of the bus

DO follow directions from my bus driver

DO NOT ignore directions from the driver

DO speak respectfully with your bus driver

DO NOT argue with the driver

DO talk and act kindly to others

DO NOT use foul language

DO NOT tease, threaten others, or use inappropriate gestures.

LEAVING THE BUS AT SCHOOL

- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Exit the bus in an orderly manner (row by row, front to back).

LEAVING THE BUS WHEN RETURNING HOME

- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Exit the bus in an orderly manner.
- Move away from the bus as quickly as possible.
- If you cross the street, do so in front of the bus. Look both ways before crossing.
- Do not leave the bus at any place except your regular stop unless you have a signed note from your parent/guardian that has been approved by the school office.
- Students in PK-2 ***must*** have a parent/guardian/designated adult or older sibling present when returning home. The adults authorized to receive a child off the bus must be communicated to the school and Central office in writing at the beginning of each school year as it does not roll over. If there is no one to receive the student then he/she will be returned to the school. If this becomes a pattern a meeting will be held between the family and the administration.

CAFETERIA – SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Suffield Public Schools complies with the professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. It is the intent of the Board of Education that schools take a proactive effort to encourage students to make nutritious food choices. Food and beverages offered for sale to students meet federal and state standards and guidelines.

Balanced breakfast and lunch menus are planned in accordance with specifications established by the federal and state governments. Monthly breakfast and lunch menus can be found on the district website (www.suffield.org) under the "Departments" tab and the drop down of *Food Service Program*.

In conformity with applicable law, necessary accommodations will be provided, where required, for students with food allergies, including emergency procedures to treat allergic reactions which may occur.

Meals: Both breakfast and lunch are served at A. Ward Spaulding School. Breakfast is free of charge to all students for the 2026-2027 school year. The menu contains several choices, and breakfast is eaten in classrooms.

Children have the option of bringing a bag lunch or eating a school lunch, which includes a choice of milk, two side items, and the featured entrée of the day. Any child may purchase lunch for $3.35. Children who bring lunch from home may purchase milk for $0.60 and snacks with money from a child's account or by cash/check. The choice of snacks varies from day to day, and children are limited to purchasing one snack per day. Families should be encouraged to apply for Free or Reduced Meals if they might qualify.

Charging Lunch: All students should keep sufficient funds in their food service account to pay for meals or bring money to pay for lunch each day. However, when students do not have sufficient money in their account, they will be able to charge their lunch so that no student will go without lunch. The cashier will remind the students to ask their parents to replenish their account. In addition, insufficient funds notices will be sent home on a weekly basis when children have a negative balance.

If you do not wish to have your child purchase snacks with money from his/her account, please contact our food services director, Jenna Janson at 860-668-3810 x3115 or jjanson@suffield.org Please visit our web page for more information at https://www.suffield.org/departments/food-services.

Student Accounts: All students in the Suffield Public Schools have a food service account. This account must stay current with a zero or positive balance.

- All students are assigned an ID number to access their lunch account which works like a PIN for an ATM machine.
- Cafeteria staff enter their ID number into a PIN pad at the cash register.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to set up a free account with www.myschoolbucks.com even if you do not use it to pay for meals. This allows you to track your child's account purchases and balance. This account helps you keep track of your children's lunch account, offering several features, including the ability to:

- Check account balances
- Monitor daily purchases
- Receive email notification of low account balances.

To set up an account through the myschoolbucks.com website, log on to the Suffield Public Schools website (www.suffield.org), under the "Departments" tab, click on *Food Services*, then click on *Myschoolbucks.com*. Your child's name, student ID number, and school zip code are required. If you do not know your child's 5-digit ID number, please contact the main office. There is **no fee** to set up an account.

Payment:

Prepay to the student's account

Prepayment is easy and convenient, eliminating the need for students to bring money to school each day. There are two ways to prepay:

1. Send a check/cash. Families may prepay using a check made out to *Suffield Food Service* Please be sure to write your child's full name and school on the check. If you send in a check and have multiple children, you may use the same check as long as the students are in the same school. If your students are in different schools, please send in separate checks. If you choose to send cash, please send it in a clearly-marked envelope with the student's full name and the word 'cafeteria.'
2. Families may also prepay using a credit card at www.myschoolbucks.com. (Please note: a convenience fee of $1.95 is added each time a deposit is made to the account. This is a bank fee and does not profit Suffield Public Schools or Aramark Food Service. You can distribute the payment among more than one child if you have multiple children in the district without paying an additional fee.

Sending payments daily

Checks/Cash are also accepted daily. If a child forgets or loses his/her lunch money, he/she may charge lunch for that day. Payment is expected on the following day. Students may charge lunch, milk, and one snack item per day.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

Applications for free and reduced-priced meals are available at each school or online at www.suffield.org under the "Departments" tab and the drop down of *Food Service Program.* Parents/guardians must return the completed form to the main office. Only one form is required per household. Families who qualify for free or reduced-priced lunches also qualify for the same category of breakfast. If the income in your household changes during the school year, please feel free to fill out another application.

Parent Visits at Lunch

Parents/guardians are welcomed to share lunch with their child(ren). To help make your visit a positive one, we ask that you please follow these guidelines:

- Please arrange with the teacher/administration prior to coming. Arrive no earlier than five minutes before the beginning of your child's identified lunch time.
- Please adhere to the school's sign-in/out procedures.
- Please wait in front of the windows for your child and his/her class to arrive.
- Allow students to be seated first.
- If purchasing ice cream or a snack, please only purchase for your child.
- If bringing lunch, please only bring it for your child. This helps us ensure the safety of students with allergies.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

If there is a question about a student's classes or academic performance in school, parents/guardians are asked to communicate first with the teacher. The proper channeling of concerns regarding instruction, discipline or learning materials is: (1) teacher, (2) administration, (3) superintendent, and (4) Board of Education.

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM

Students are expected to pursue their school work with integrity and honesty. Cheating and plagiarism demonstrate a lack of integrity and character. That is inconsistent with Suffield Public Schools goals and values. All forms of cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable. The misrepresentation by students of homework, class work, tests, reports, or other assignments as if they were entirely their own work shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidents require disciplinary action. Consequences for cheating will take into account the grade level of the student and the severity of the misrepresentation.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, administrators, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraeducators and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, school counselors, paraeducators, social workers, psychologists, licensed nurses, physicians, licensed behavior analysts, and substitute teachers are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive training in their use, as required by state law.

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

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

CLASS PLACEMENT

Beginning in March of each school year, our school staff begins formulating class placements for the next school year. The process begins with a student's current teacher, who reflects on each student's learning needs, school performance, educational progress, and social interactions. Concurrently, input is provided by other faculty members, such as art, music, physical education, library media, special education, and reading and math interventionists, as well as the school psychologist, school social worker, speech/language pathologist, and students' previous teachers, relative to the learning needs of individuals and groups of students.

To further enhance the process outlined above, we welcome parent input with regard to what you feel are your child's learning needs, your child's learning style, and the type of learning environment within which you believe he/she can be successful. If you feel that your input is necessary or appropriate, we ask that you share this with us at a time that we will relay in writing to you annually each spring. Any information you provided for your child's previous class placement will not automatically be considered in developing the next year's placement.

In offering your input, we ask that you refrain from requesting specific teachers, and that you rely on the professional expertise and judgment of our school staff to place your child in an educational setting that they feel will most appropriately provide for optimal learning and growth based upon all information to be considered. We are sorry that specific requests for individual teachers cannot be honored, and we thank you for your understanding of this. As we obtain your cooperation and support, we appreciate both your input and your understanding that final decisions must reflect class placements that are beneficial to all students.

Through further consultation between each teacher, the principal and the assistant principal, class groups are finalized so that they are as balanced as possible based upon the following: heterogeneity, social interaction, academic performance, special education needs, gender, and class size. As you can imagine, the entire process is a very complex, thoughtful and deliberate one.

CODE OF CONDUCT/RESTORATIVE PRACTICES RESPONSE

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. They must accept responsibility for misbehavior and engage with school staff to identify how a different choice of action could result in a better outcome. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

To assist in creating a positive and respectful school climate, we have implemented a school-wide initiative based on Responsive Classroom, in which we teach, model, practice, reteach, and celebrate student actions that are respectful, responsible, and kind. This program assists in creating a school environment in which all students feel safe, supported, engaged, and successful.

Our school community has established several clear expectations for behavior in all areas of our school. Our staff continually teaches those expectations to all students and frequently acknowledges them for their expected behavior. By teaching our students the expected behaviors in a positive way, we have established a common language for everyone in our building.

We believe that by teaching and reinforcing expected behavior, we foster a school community where all

Classroom	Bathroom	Hallway	Cafeteria	Recess	Assembly
Arrival	Dismissal	Bus	Fire Drill	Lock Down	

In addition to the school-wide expectations, classroom teachers teach weekly lessons focused on building social and emotional skills through the standards-based Fly Five curriculum.

Dress Code

Students' overall appearance should fall within the generally accepted definitions of neatness and cleanliness. Generally, the students are expected to dress and groom themselves for the business of students will succeed and grow in a safe and supportive school environment. In addition to teaching and acknowledging positive behaviors, all staff members at Spaulding School address unexpected behavior in a consistent way to support the development of appropriate social and emotional skills.

Procedures for Teaching Behavior Expectations

All staff at Spaulding School use school-wide lesson plans as guidelines to teach the expectations in all settings to all students. These lessons serve as a re-teaching experience for the entire class. Additionally, teachers revisit the lessons throughout the year as necessary. Specific expectations are reviewed in the following areas:

school so as to neither distract other students or teachers, disrupt the education process, or pose a health or safety threat to anyone.

1. The wearing of hats or bandanas inside the school building is not allowed except in the case of approved special events or activities.
2. T-shirts with otherwise inappropriate messages or content also are not allowed to be worn at school.
3. Slippers, cleats, and tap shoes only may be worn for approved special events (e.g., "Pajama Day"). To ensure safety, such footwear is not permitted on the bus and should not be worn to school. On special event days, children should carry their slippers, etc. to school and change in the classroom.
4. Clothing should be free of slogans, names, titles or the like, which are defamatory toward person(s), group(s), the school, or other organizations which are likely to incite or inflame.
5. Students participate in physical education weekly and are expected to wear sneakers. Students also play outdoors at recess in all seasons of the year and are expected to have appropriate

footwear/outerwear for seasonal conditions.

Playscape Rules and Procedures

All students at Spaulding School receive instruction from our physical education teacher regarding the rules and use of the playscape and other areas of the playground at the beginning of the school year. Students may not use the playscape until all students at school have received this instruction. A review of the rules and use of the playground are ongoing throughout the school year.

The following general rules apply to the use of our playscape and playground:

- Play safe! Be kind! Include others in play!
- Keep hands to self.
- Games of tag are not permitted.
- Walk. Don't run.
- Slides are for riding down, not climbing up.
- Descend all slides and poles one person at a time.
- Leave wood chips on the ground. They make the ground safe for play.

Failure of students to abide by these rules will result in a "time out" from playing on the playscape and an alternate activity being chosen. Appropriate footwear is to be worn when playing on the playscape. Only properly secured, rubber-sole shoes are allowed on the playscape. Open-toe shoes, clogs, sandals, and flip flops are not to be worn, as these present a potential risk to safety.

Smoking

A. Ward Spaulding School is a smoke-free environment. Smoking or use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, or vapor product devices are prohibited on school property, or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law.

Substance Abuse

Suffield Public Schools prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of alcohol or controlled substances on school grounds or during school activities.

Discipline

Sometimes children make mistakes, and these mistakes are an important part of the learning process. When students demonstrate unexpected behaviors, a range of consequences is considered and rendered reflecting the seriousness and/or frequency of the misbehavior. All consequences are intended to be opportunities for students to learn and to address any harm caused by their misbehavior. One or more of the following actions may be taken by school personnel: verbal/nonverbal reminder or redirection, reteaching of the behavior expectation, student/teacher conference, written communication home, parent/teacher/student conference, reflection time and/or time out, written apology, loss of privilege, modification in schedule, written behavior plan, or referral to the principal or assistant principal. When a student chooses to participate in repeated or extreme misbehavior, he or she will be referred to the principal or assistant principal. These consequences may occur: parent/administrator/student

conference, written problem solving exercise or written apology, loss of privilege, redefined lunch or recess, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

The goal of any consequence is to assist the student to understand why the behavior was a poor choice. We will work with the student to develop strategies so that he/she can restore relationships or repair harm caused and make better choices in the future.

Suspension procedures, both in-school and out-of-school, will follow Suffield Board of Education Policy on Student Discipline (5144).
http://www.suffield.org

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Teachers may be contacted by SeeSaw or email. A staff directory is available on each school's website. Please allow teachers 24 hours, during the school week, to respond to your message/email. Please be aware that Suffield policy prevents teachers from discussing confidential information in an email correspondence.

DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AED's)

Spaulding School has one automatic external defibrillator (AED) and school personnel trained in AED operation and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The AED and trained personnel will be available during the school's normal operational hours, at school-sponsored athletic events and practices on school grounds, and at school-sponsored events not taking place during normal school operational hours. The school also has an emergency action response plan addressing the use of trained school personnel to respond to individuals experiencing sudden cardiac arrest or similar life-threatening emergencies.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS AND POSTING ON WEBSITE

Printed materials may be distributed to parents/guardians by students as a means of communication. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

School administration or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The material is related to the school, community, or local recreational or civic activity.
2. The material does not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain.
3. The material does not promote any outside governmental political party, candidate, or position.
4. Does not promote profit making organizations.
5. Does not advocate a position regarding a referendum question.

Materials that have a religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The District has the right to impose neutral time, place, and manner restrictions on the dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not endorsed or sponsored by the District.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by school administration, sponsor, or teacher. Such items include school posters, brochures, and school newspapers.

Website

Any information posted on the website will follow the same guidelines as stated in *Distribution of Materials*. In addition, posts are limited to information relevant to the school and students that is either sponsored by Suffield Public Schools, Parks and Recreation, or another non-profit organization. Even with these parameters, the decision to post information on the website is up to the discretion of school administration.

Posters

Signs and posters that students wish to display must be approved by school administration. Posters displayed without authorization will be removed. Any student who posts such material without authorization shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Distribution of Literature

Students have a right to distribute literature on school grounds and in school buildings provided such distribution does not interfere with or disrupt the educational process. No literature may be distributed unless a copy is submitted in advance to the Superintendent of Schools and/or the building administration.

DISTRICT-PROVIDED PERSONAL LEARNING DEVICES

All students will be provided with a DISTRICT DEVICE, unless they choose to use their own device. Parents and students must sign and agree to the student device sign-out sheet and guidelines provided by their school. Parents are financially responsible for damages, loss or theft of the device. Students leaving Suffield Public Schools must return their devices, with accessories, on the day of departure. Device insurance is offered by the District during the month of August only.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event school is closed because of inclement weather, phone, text, and email communications will be made using the automated calling system. Emergency closings will also be posted on the district's website, www.suffield.org.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Parents of English Learners participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the English Learners program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services, which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

FACILITIES

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are expected to remain in the area in which their activity is scheduled to take place.

After dismissal and unless involved in a teacher/staff supervised activity, students are expected to leave the school grounds immediately.

All school facilities, including the fields, are scheduled with priority given to Spaulding School and Suffield Public Schools above all other groups. All groups (both school-related and non-school related) wishing to reserve an area of Spaulding School (e.g. cafeteria, gym, etc.) must submit an electronic request to reserve the desired area from the community use calendar which can be accessed on the school website.

FEES/OBLIGATIONS

Materials that are part of the basic educational program are provided without charge to students. A student is expected, however, to provide his or her own supplies. A list of school supplies is provided with the annual school mailing. Students may be asked to pay certain other fees, including:

1. Subscriptions to educational magazines
2. The materials for a class project that the student will keep.
3. Voluntary purchases of t-shirts, pictures, etc.
4. Fees for damaged library books and school-owned equipment.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal or assistant principal. While on a field trip, all students are considered to be representatives of Spaulding School and must demonstrate expected Spaulding Star behavior of respect, responsibility, and kindness. The Board of Education strongly encourages all transportation of students to be on buses or other transportation vehicles which conform to the requirements of law and regulations of the State Department of Education. There may be a charge to families for student participation in field trips.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or school sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related

expenses. Any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact a guidance counselor, advisor or administrator to request confidential help.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Fire drills and other safety drills are held monthly as required by state law. Students must follow appropriate procedures posted for each drill. Crisis response drills will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency and district safety personnel.

Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or other adults in charge quickly, quietly, and in an orderly manner.

Local law enforcement and other local public safety officials will evaluate and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills.

FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The Suffield Public Schools recognize that students have a right to bring into our schools, in a judicious manner governed by regulations, items for posting that are not considered obscene, libelous, disruptive, vulgar, and are deemed by the school administration to be consistent with community standards. Further, no expressed idea will be suppressed because it is not shared by the majority

FOOD ALLERGIES

The Suffield Public Schools (the "district") recognize that food allergies, glycogen storage disease ("GSD") and diabetes may be life threatening. For this reason, the district is committed to developing strategies and practices to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to life threatening food allergens and to ensure prompt and effective medical response should a student suffer an allergic reaction while at school. The district is also committed to appropriately managing and supporting students with glycogen storage disease and diabetes. The district further recognizes the importance of collaborating with parents, adult students (defined as students age eighteen (18) and older) and appropriate medical staff in developing such practices and encourages strategies to enable the student to become increasingly proactive in the care and management of the student's food allergy, glycogen storage disease or diabetes, as developmentally appropriate.

Substitutions to the regular meal provided by the school will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal services will be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the student.

A student with glycogen storage disease is permitted to have a parent/guardian or a person they so designate to provide food or dietary supplements on school grounds during the school day.

Students with Life-Threatening Food Allergies

Students with life-threatening food allergies should be encouraged, trained and supported when appropriate to participate in and be responsible for the management of their allergic conditions.

Students should:

- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear. Ask a friend to help you if you cannot get to an adult.
- Follow safety measures established by your parent(s)/guardian(s) and school team at all times.
- Not trade or share food with anyone; not eat any food item that has not come from home or been approved by a parent or guardian
- Wash hands before and after eating; develop a rapport with the school nurse or other trusted adult in the school to assist with successful management of the allergy in school.
- If approved by your parent and authorized by your physician, carry your epinephrine auto-injector at all times; and report any instances of teasing or bullying to an adult immediately

Parents of a Student with Food Allergies

Parents should:

- Inform the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school or as soon as possible after a diagnosis
- Provide the school nurse with health information from your health care provider
- Provide the school nurse with medication orders from the licensed provider and the medication.
- Participate in developing an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) with the school nurse and team.
- Provide the school nurse with at least annual updates on your child's allergy status and with written permission to contact your healthcare provider.
- Provide the school nurse with the licensed provider's statement if the student no longer has allergies. Provide the school with a way to reach you (cell phone, etc)
- Provide extra safe snacks for the student to have in lieu of any food event not previously approved by the parent.

FUNDRAISING

The majority of fund-raising efforts are organized and led by our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Any food items sold as part of any fund-raising activity must meet the nutritional standards published by the Connecticut Department of Education. Beverage or foods not allowed for sale during regular school hours may be sold provided: (1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) the sale is at the location of such event, and (3) the food or beverage are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

GREEN CLEANING PROGRAMS

A green cleaning program to clean and maintain the school was implemented by July 1, 2011. The program provides for the procurement and proper use of environmentally preferable cleaning products in the school. The cleaning products used meet standards approved by the Department of Administrative Services and minimize potential harmful effects on human health and the environment. Parents/Guardians may request a written copy of the District's policy pertaining to the green cleaning program and a written statement which includes the names and types of environmentally preferable cleaning products used in the school and where in the building they are applied; the schedule for applying the products; and the names of the school administrator or designee whom the parent/guardian or student may contact for more information.

No parent, guardian, teacher, or staff member may bring into the school facility any consumer product which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect.

HEALTH SERVICES

The primary role of the School Nurse is to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school. It should be emphasized that an ill child does not achieve maximum success in school, and should be kept home. Upon return, a note of explanation for the absence is required. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a physician.

In the interest of your child's health and the health of all children, please observe the following guidelines:

- If your child has been running a fever or has been sick during the night or before school, it is advisable to keep him/her home, therefore minimizing the risk of affecting others. If your child has a fever of 100 or above, please keep him/her home for 24 hours after the fever has subsided. Although consistent attendance is desirable, a sick child should never be sent to school.

- If your child has a contagious disease or is likely to be absent for three or more days, please notify the school nurse. The school nurse is required to report all contagious diseases.

- A student absent four consecutive days or more may be requested to see the school nurse upon returning to school.

- A written excuse should be sent to school for any absence. A note from your physician is required for prolonged or frequent absence.

- Any child well enough to come to school is expected to participate in all activities, including recess and physical education, unless a signed physician's note indicates otherwise. A parent may send a note to extend the excuse up to two days after the doctor's excuse ends.

A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information. Throughout the school year, students are screened for vision and hearing. Parents/guardians will be informed if any deviations from the accepted norms are discovered.

Necessary health practices such as proper rest, diet, personal hygiene, and hand washing must be constantly encouraged at home as well as at school. Since we encourage children to be outdoors when it is not actually snowing or raining, it is important for them to be dressed warmly with boots, hats, coats, and gloves. Other appropriate clothing, such as sweaters, may be needed on chilly days. Shoes can get wet in early morning physical education classes. Extra footwear might be needed.

Administration of Medication

Parents/guardians of students requiring medication during school should contact the school nurse. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school and are available from the school nurse. All medication must be in the original container with proper labels.

In cases in which a student is able to self-administer medication, parents/guardians must submit a signed statement that the medication must be taken during the school day and the student is capable of administering the medication. The statement must be accompanied by a physician's, dentists, or advanced practice registered nurse's statement indicating the necessity and naming the medication, the strength, and the prescribed dosage. The statement in writing must specify the schedule on which it is to be taken and the details of administration. Such statements must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

A student with asthma or an allergic condition may carry an inhaler or an EpiPen or similar device in school at all times if he/she is under the care of a physician, physician assistant or advanced practical nurse and such practitioner certifies in writing that the child needs to keep an asthmatic inhaler or EpiPen at all times to ensure prompt treatment of the child's asthma or allergic condition and to protect the child against serious harm or death. A written authorization of the parent/guardian is required.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified school employee" may administer epinephrine in a cartridge injector for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions but were not previously known to have serious allergies and therefore do not have prior written authorization of a parent/guardian or qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. Parents/guardians may submit in writing to the school nurse and school medical advisor that epinephrine shall not be administered to his/her child.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified/school employee" may administer anti-epileptic medication to a specific student with a medically diagnosed epileptic condition that requires prompt treatment in accordance with the student's individual seizure action plan. Written parental permission and written order from a physician is required.

A student with diabetes may test his/her own blood glucose levels if the student has written permission from his/her parent/guardian and a written order from a Connecticut licensed physician. The time or place of such testing shall not be restricted.

A school nurse or school administration will select a qualified school employee to, under certain conditions; give a glycogen injection to a student with diabetes who may require prompt treatment to protect him/her from serious harm or death. Written parental permission and written orders from a physician are required.

The District does not allow the ingestion of marijuana for palliative (medical) use in any school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities, on or off school grounds.

Communicable/Infectious Diseases

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

Before a student may return to school after an absence due to such a condition, the parents/guardians of the student may be required to submit medical evidence that the student has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

Disabilities

Suffield Public Schools will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA, and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

Emergency Medical Treatment

Parents/guardians are asked to supply or update the main office with workplace and home phone numbers, the name of a doctor and preferred hospital, and an emergency contact person in the event of a medical emergency. Please be sure to submit this information by going to the district website, www.suffield.org and clicking on "Parent Portal" under the "Parents and Students" tab. For the safety and comfort of your child, be sure to update this information as needed during the course of the school year.

The emergency contact person is defined as someone who must be available to come to school when you are unavailable to do so.

Head Lice (Pediculosis)

The Suffield Public Schools is committed to maximizing students' academic performance and physical well-being in a healthy and safe environment. The district recognizes that head lice infestations do not pose a health hazard, are not a sign of uncleanliness, and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. Misinformation about head lice causes concern for parents/guardians and school staff. The goals of providing a healthy and safe environment for students with head lice are to: (1) maximize academic performance; and (2) minimize absences due to unnecessary exclusion from school of students with head lice. The school nurse can be contacted for treatment guidelines.

When three confirmed, separate cases of head lice in the same classroom occur, the nurse sends a letter home to parents/guardians relative to awareness of the multiple cases and treatment guidelines.

Health Records

The school nurse maintains health records using the Connecticut *Health Assessment and Record Form*. These records are accessible to certified staff working with the child and to school health aides if

permission is granted by the nurse or school administrator. Parents/guardians may request to inspect the health records of their child. Copies may be provided if requested. Original copies of the record are sent where a student transfers to another school in Connecticut. If the student moves out-of-state, a copy will be forwarded. Health records are maintained for at least six years after the student graduates. The District will comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to maintain the privacy of protected health information.

Homebound Instruction

Home instruction is available to students who are unable to attend school for medical and/or mental health reasons for a period of ten school days or longer as diagnosed by a physician, psychiatrist, or the Planning and Placement Team (PPT). Home instruction may also be provided for those students who have been excluded from regular school attendance for disciplinary reasons.

Homeless Students

Homeless students, as defined by federal and state legislation, will have all programs, services, and transportation that other students enjoy and may continue to attend the school of origin. The local liaison for homeless children is Diana Kelley, Pupil Service Director. The District has reviewed its existing policies and regulations to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth. Homeless children and youths are defined as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence". Homeless children have the right to attend the school of origin "to the extent feasible," unless doing so is contrary to the request of such student's parent/ guardian or unaccompanied youth.

Any homeless child or youth denied school accommodations shall continue in attendance or will be immediately enrolled in the school selected by the child in the school district. A written explanation of the reasons for denial of school accommodations in a manner and form understandable to such homeless child or youth, or parent/guardian, will be provided. Information will also be provided regarding the right to appeal the decision of the denial of accommodations. The homeless child or youth is entitled to continue in attendance during all available appeals.

A homeless student who is not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian, shall have full access to his/her educational and medical records in the Board's possession.

Immunizations

All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physical or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical reasons, a statement from a physician as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Meningococcal, Pneumococcal, Rubella, Influenza, and Haemophilus Influenza Type B. Failure to adhere to these requirements will interrupt the student's ability to attend school.

Further information and questions regarding immunizations may be discussed with the school nurse.

Physical Examinations

All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment to the district. (C.G.S. 10-204a). If a homeless student, as defined by federal statute, lacks immunization/medical records, the school will enroll the child and refer the parent/guardian to the district's homeless liaison.

HOMEWORK

Education is a life-long process, which extends beyond the school. Students should recognize that learning occurs in the home and community. Homework is one means of promoting self-directed, independent learning.

Homework assignments:

- Strengthen basic skills;
- Apply classroom learning;
- Stimulate the student's interest through further exploration;
- Reinforce dependent study skills;
- Develop qualities of initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; and
- Stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time.

The manner in which and the degree to which homework is used vary from grade to grade. This is consistent with developmentally appropriate practice. Homework practices at Spaulding School reflect a natural progression.

Specific expectations related to homework, and the involvement of parents/guardians toward the completion of homework, are communicated by teachers to parents/guardians during the annual Open House for parents, and as part of individual assignments as appropriate. The degree to which parental assistance with homework is desirable varies from grade to grade and from assignment to assignment. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact their children's teacher if clarification with regard to homework is needed. In general, however, parents/guardians promote positive attitudes toward homework through regular exchanges with children and teachers, and by providing the time and a place for their children to complete homework.

INDOOR AIR QUALITY

The Board of Education provides for a uniform inspection and evaluation program of indoor air quality complying with the Environmental Protection Agency's Tools for Indoor Air Quality for Schools Program. The results of the evaluation will be made available for public inspection at a regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting and also posted on the District's website.

The District will report biennially, to the Commissioner of Education on the condition of its facilities, its long range facilities program, its air quality program, and green cleaning program. The Board will utilize standard reporting forms to conduct and report on both IAQ and HVAC inspections and will provide the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) the completed forms for each school. The forms and/or reports will be made available at a regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting and on the Board of Education/individual school website.

INSURANCE

School insurance is made available to families through a specific program. For parents/guardians interested in securing insurance, brochures are available in the main office at the beginning of each academic year. The program is not mandatory, but serves as an opportunity to provide additional protection for children while in school. Any such arrangements are contractual between the parent/guardian and insurance carriers and the Suffield Public Schools assume no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

In the event of a critical emergency, all school personnel, including students, will follow the "Lock Down Procedures". Students will be informed of specific actions they should take when a Lock Down Procedure is put into effect. Lock down drills, like fire drills, will occur periodically during the school year.

LOST AND FOUND

The Lost and Found closet is located at the main foyer entrance across from the glass showcase. The closet houses a collection of lost and found articles (coats, gloves, lunch boxes, etc.) to be claimed by students. Students or parents/guardians should feel free to check the lost and found in the hallway when necessary and convenient. Whenever practical, any items brought to school should have a child's name placed on them to ensure return to the rightful owner. Unclaimed items will be displayed during parent-teacher conferences in November and March. Lost and found items that remain after each conference period and at the end of the school year are donated, as we do not have adequate space to maintain these over time. Parents/guardians are notified in advance of this, and their prompt response and item retrieval are appreciated.

MAGNET SCHOOLS

It is recognized that some students may benefit from attendance at a magnet school not limited by school district boundaries. District students may enroll directly into a magnet school, with which the District does not have a participation agreement, on a space available basis. The District will be responsible for any tuition for such enrollment, but not for transportation, unless the magnet school is within the boundaries of the school district. Tuition will not be paid by the district for student placed by their parents/guardians in a pre-school (PK) magnet program. Parents/Guardians are required, not later than two weeks following an enrollment lottery for an inter-district magnet school, to notify the district of their child's enrollment or placement on a waiting list for enrollment in the coming school year.

MANDATED REPORTERS/MANDATED REPORTING

The District complies with all laws and regulations regarding the reporting of actual or suspected child abuse and neglect. For additional information, refer to page 29 of this handbook under the heading "Child Abuse and Neglect" and to Board Policy and Regulation 5141.4.

MIGRANT STUDENTS

The district has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs, and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation, and evaluation of the migrant program.

OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of a publicized Board policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. Examples of off-school conduct that may result in such discipline include but are not limited to:

1. Sale, possession, use, or distribution of dangerous weapons, including martial arts weapons;
2. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs;
3. Violent conduct;
4. Making of a bomb threat;
5. Threatening to harm or kill another student or member of the staff; where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to partner with the school to ensure their child's educational successes. Conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors or administrators may initiate a conference. A parent or student may arrange a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members. Conferences are held during November and March during and after school hours, but every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS

Education is most effective and purposeful when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications and interactions. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of their child's school activities and with the District's academic and special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in parent organizations, attendance at Board of Education meetings, and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged and welcomed.

PARENT PORTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Suffield Public Schools utilizes PowerSchool Student Information System, including a parent portal. The parent portal will allow a parent/guardian of students to access student records, including report cards and attendance via a secure website.

PARENT REQUESTED OBSERVATIONS

The Suffield Public Schools has as its highest priority, the safety and the welfare of its students and staff. The Suffield Board of Education welcomes purposeful observations of classes by parents/guardians and other interested members of the community. The Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that students may learn in an educational environment free of unnecessary disruption and distractions and to provide a school environment that is safe for staff and students. In the interest of protecting the welfare of students and staff, preserving the privacy rights of students, minimizing disruptions to the learning process, and maintaining order and security on its premises, the following guidelines have been established for observations:

1. All observers will be governed by visitation expectations of Policy #1250.
2. Anyone wishing to observe a class must contact school administration prior to the observation and provide the name of the observer and purpose of the observation. Outside evaluators are required to provide their phone number, address, and professional credentials. Whenever possible, a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours' notice should be provided.
3. In addressing requests for classroom observation, school administration will consider its responsibility to avoid disruption to the learning environment and learning benefit of students and minimizing distractions and disruptions to the learning process.
4. Requests to observe a class shall not be unreasonably withheld; however school administration may deny or place limitations on observations to ensure the integrity and benefit of the educational process for teachers and students. If an observation is denied, alternate avenues to achieve the purpose, if available, should be suggested and/or arranged.

PESTICIDE APPLICATION

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact Larry Plano (lplano@suffield.org).

PETS AND ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

Children should not bring pets and animals to school unless their parent/guardian has spoken with their teacher, and the teacher has secured permission from school administration. This policy is implemented in light of precautions relative to communicable animal diseases.

PHOTOGRAPHS

From time-to-time during the school year, school personnel and/or media take photographs. If a parent/guardian does not want their child to be photographed for school use, school website or for media purposes, they must indicate within our Student Information Collection period during August.. Once a decision has been made, no exceptions can be made to approve or allow certain pictures but not all. The decision is a yes or no to sharing of all photos on all platforms. Photos of individual and classroom groups are taken annually, which may be purchased by parents/guardians, but they are not obligated to do so.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

All students in elementary school shall have in the regular school day, time devoted to physical exercise, of not less than twenty minutes in total, unless altered for a student by a Planning and Placement Team for a child requiring special education. Such physical exercise can be a combination of planned physical education classes, recess, and/or teacher-directed classroom activities. The period of physical activity will not be taken away from an elementary student as a form of punishment. In addition, students in all grades, K-12, cannot be assigned physical activity as a form of punishment. School employees may not prevent a student in elementary school from participating in recess or in other sustained opportunities for physical activity during classroom learning as a form of discipline.

PROMOTION/RETENTION/PLACEMENT

Students shall be placed by the certified staff at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally. The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop regulations for promotion, acceleration, and retention in the best interest of the long-term development of the child.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade or level to level. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the certified staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will always be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents or guardian, but the final decision will rest with the school administration.

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

It is the policy of the Board to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of the Board when the loss or damage occurs through fault of the student.

Any student damaging or defacing school property will be financially liable for restoring the property regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act, in addition to any other discipline up to and including arrest or civil prosecution as deemed appropriate. In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property will be exactly those which the school must incur to repair the damage.

Searches of desks may be conducted at any time when there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. Parents/guardians will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment and should notify the main office immediately if repair is necessary. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current school year. Students are encouraged not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, as liability for these items remains with the student.

PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisor, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

RECORDING OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The District prohibits the covert recording of classroom activities. The recording of teachers or students in class is inherently disruptive to the educational process. Students violating this rule will be subject to discipline and confiscation of the electronic device.

REPORT CARDS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Report cards are available on the parent portal via PowerSchool three times each year in all grades (December, March, and June). Formal parent-teacher conferences will be conducted in November and March. Students' final report cards are available electronically at the end of the school year in June.

We believe in the power of forging sincere and productive working relationships between home and school. We welcome parents'/guardians' interest and desire in discussing their children's educational growth and development and stand ready to respond to questions whenever they may arise. For these reasons, both parents/guardians and teachers may request a conference, by phone or in person, during the school year.

SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority of Suffield Public Schools. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's code of discipline.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders at school.
- Be aware of and follow emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of staff who supervise the welfare of students.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

Suffield Public Schools recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, President's Day, and Memorial Day are encouraged.

The District reminds students, faculty, and school administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious and respectful of the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore:

1. school and class plays shall not be overly religious, and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent/guardian or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork, and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the school administration should be contacted.

An opportunity will be provided, at the beginning of each school day, for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the *Pledge of Allegiance*. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Nonparticipants are expected to maintain respect, order, and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS

Interested persons may inspect "public district records" which are maintained at the office of the Superintendent of Schools during normal hours of business. Copies of records, permitted by law to be disclosed, may also be attained.

SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY

Each school in Suffield implements a school security and safety plan based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Each school, as required by law, has an established School Security and Safety Committee which assists in the development and administration of the school's security and safety plan. Each district school will conduct a security and vulnerability assessment every two years.

Suffield has developed, maintains and implements an emergency disaster preparedness and response plan ("School Security and Safety Plan"). The plan is based upon the standards promulgated by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Development and implementation of the plan includes collaboration with local and state emergency responders, (law enforcement, fire department, emergency rescue squads, and local public health administrators). The plan, representing an all hazards approach, utilizes the four recognized phases of crisis management: (1) mitigation/prevention, (2) preparedness, (3) response, and (4) recovery.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

When a reasonable suspicion arises that use or possession of a student's property is illegal, illicit, disruptive, or a danger to the general welfare of students and staff, a search may be made of the student's person or personal property.

Desks are the property of Spaulding School. The right to inspect desks and cubby areas that are assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property, and school property with reasonable care for the *Fourth Amendment* rights of students.

The exercise of the right to inspect also requires protection of each student's personal privacy and protection from coercion. An authorized school administrator may search a student's desk or cubby area under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or cubby area contains the probable presence of contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material poses a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety, and health in the school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities. Use of drug-detection dogs and metal detectors or similar detective devices may be used only on the express authorization of the Suffield Board of Education.

District officials may seize any item which is evidence of a violation of law, Board policy, administrative regulation or school rule, or which the possession or use of is prohibited by such law, policy, regulation, or rule.

A student may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The scope of the search must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and the nature of the infraction.

Students may be searched by law enforcement officials on school property or when the student is under the jurisdiction of the district upon the request of the law enforcement official. Such requests, ordinarily, shall be based on warrant. School administration will attempt to notify the student's parents/guardians in advance and will be present for all such searches.

SECLUSION/RESTRAINT, USE OF

Teachers and staff of the Suffield Public Schools comply with all State laws and Board of Education policies with respect to the use of seclusion and restraint of students in their care during the school day and during extra-curricular activities. Use of Physical Restraint/Seclusion is governed by Board policy 5144.1 and the administrative regulations associated with the policy, both of which are available on the District's website. Life-threatening physical restraint will never be used on a student at school or under the care of staff at a school-sponsored activity. In the unlikely event that seclusion or restraint is required, it will be performed only by trained staff, under constant supervision, and used only in case of emergency.

If a seclusion or restraint occurs, every attempt will be made to notify the parent or guardian immediately, and no later than 24 hours following the event.

The District is required to keep detailed written records of all incidents of seclusion and restraint, and such records are available for inspection by the student's parent or guardian. A written report will be sent home promptly following any such incident. Reports concerning all incidents of seclusion and restraint are made to the State Department of Education, and de-identified data concerning the District's statistics are available to anyone upon request. State law also permits a teacher or other staff to use "reasonable physical force" if necessary to protect someone from immediate physical injury, to obtain possession of a dangerous instrument or controlled substance, to protect property from physical damage, or to restrain a child or remove the child to another area to maintain order. Briefly making physical contact with a student to comfort a child, to keep the child from being injured, to break up a fight, or escort the child to a safe area is considered neither "seclusion" nor "restraint." Such actions are rare and used only in case of exigent circumstances as defined by law. Any questions concerning the District's policies on seclusion and restraint should be directed to the Director of Special Services at 860-668-3803.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The district wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. It is unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Any student who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, his/her teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse, or any responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint. The administration will take action to investigate the allegations. The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee. A complaint alleging sexual harassment by a student or staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the principal or designee or with the Title IX Coordinator, Diana Kelley.

SNACKS

Students may bring a daily snack from home that they will be allowed to eat at the teacher's discretion. We do recommend that snacks be nutritious, i.e., fruit, cheese, popcorn, etc. Furthermore, we kindly request your cooperation in providing simple snacks requiring minimal preparation that students may eat independently and clean up easily. In keeping with our District's Wellness Policy and working to promote students' healthy lifestyles and well-being, we do not allow cupcakes or other outside food treats for birthday celebrations. Parents do have the option to purchase ice cream/popsicles from the cafeteria for the entire class. These are the only food options as allergen information is available to all parents. Additionally, ideas for food-free birthday celebrations are provided in Appendix 2 of our District's Wellness Policy.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Suffield Public Schools believes children's social and emotional development are essential foundations to school readiness and academic success. Therefore, the District's educational program has included social and emotional learning and development to support the learning of skills needed to prepare students for careers, college and life. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. The key characteristics of the SEL program include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

STUDENT SAFETY

At Suffield Public Schools the safety and well-being of our students, staff, and school community is our highest priority. As part of our commitment to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment, we want to inform you of our district's processes in responding to student threats of harm to either themselves or others.

Threats of Harm to Others

In response to a student threat of harm the district utilizes the Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) model for assessing and responding to these threats.

What is CSTAG?

CSTAG is a research-based threat assessment model developed by Dr. Dewey Cornell at the University of Virginia. It is designed to help schools identify, assess, and respond appropriately to student threats in a fair, objective, and effective manner. The model emphasizes early intervention, problem-solving, and providing support for students who may be struggling—while maintaining a strong focus on school safety.

Key Principles of CSTAG:

- Not all threats are serious; CSTAG helps distinguish between transient (non-serious) and substantive (serious) threats.
- The focus is on resolving conflicts, reducing risk, and supporting student development.
- The process involves collaboration among educators, parents, mental health professionals and when necessary, law enforcement.

Why CSTAG?

CSTAG is nationally recognized and supported by extensive research. It provides a consistent and evidence-based framework for our schools to follow when managing threat-related situations. This approach helps ensure that all students are treated with fairness and that threats are addressed quickly and appropriately to prevent harm.

Statements of Self Harm

If a student expresses thoughts of suicide or self-harm, makes statements that raise concern, or exhibits behaviors that suggest they may be at risk, a trained school mental health professional will meet with the student as soon as possible to complete a suicide risk assessment. As part of this process trained staff may use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS). This evidence-based screening tool helps staff better understand a student's level of risk and determine the most appropriate next steps.

The assessment is conducted in a private, supportive, and nonjudgmental manner. Students are asked questions about their thoughts, feelings, and current level of safety. Research shows that asking these questions does not increase the risk of suicide; rather, it helps identify students who may need support and intervention.

Parents or guardians will be contacted promptly whenever a suicide risk assessment is completed. School staff will review the assessment findings, discuss recommendations, and work collaboratively with families to develop a plan that supports the student's safety and well-being. Depending on the level of risk, next steps may include creating a school-based safety plan, connecting the family with community mental health resources, recommending an immediate mental health evaluation, or contacting emergency services if a student is determined to be at imminent risk.

Suffield Public Schools is committed to working in partnership with families to ensure that students receive timely, compassionate, and appropriate support. Our goal is to promote student safety, connect families with needed resources, and help every student return to learning in a safe and supportive environment.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Our response to our students' diverse needs reflects both our ongoing belief that all children can learn and our commitment to the growth and development of the whole child. Students' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs are identified through the knowledgeable and collaborative efforts of a caring school staff and an involved parent community. Driven by individual student needs and situations, a continuum of services, educational programs, resources, and interventions are creatively designed for and flexibly provided to students.

The District utilizes a process of Multi Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), which combines systematic assessment, decision-making, and a multi-tiered delivery model to improve educational and behavioral outcomes for all students. Academic and behavioral support and targeted interventions will be provided for students who are not making academic progress at expected levels in the general curriculum.

Three tiers of support (or intervention) are developed to support student learning. The progress that students make at each stage of intervention is monitored closely by Spaulding School staff. Results of this monitoring inform decisions about further need for research-based instruction.

Tier 1: All children receive high-quality curriculum and best practice instruction in the general education classroom or program. Eighty percent of students are expected to achieve within the range of grade-level expectations without additional tiers of support.

Tier 2: Students may need extra support in addition to the high-quality instruction they receive in Tier I. Students may receive additional teaching strategies or methods that are proven to be effective in helping children to learn. These teaching methods can occur in large or small groups, as well as in or outside of the classroom. Ten to fifteen percent of students in a school may need this level of support.

Tier 3: When a high level of support is needed, children are given individualized or small group instruction with more frequency. Up to five percent of students in a school may need this level of support.

Sometimes a student does not make sufficient progress through the intervention used in the MTSS process. The teacher knows this from monitoring the student's progress. Revised intervention plans may be developed that will be instructed by other building specialists or support staff.

For students in need of Special Education programs, a planning and placement team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all students presently in Special Education and special services programs.

Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must be referred to a special education Planning & Placement Team for evaluation (PPT). The PPT will determine whether special education services are required. Parents must give their consent before any evaluation can be done or any services can begin. An Individualized Education Plan, based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study will be developed by the PPT, with parental involvement. Parents will be informed regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions. Parents have the right to have the school paraeducator assigned to their child, if any, attend and participate in PPT meetings. Parents, as required by law, will be provided information at PPT meetings about their right to have advisors and paraeducators attend PPT meetings.

A school must offer an IEP that is "reasonably calculated to enable a child to make appropriate progress in light of the child's circumstances." Every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.

Paraeducators, Academic Support and Duty Clerks

We are fortunate to have talented and dedicated paraeducators, academic support and duty clerks within our school who work to support classroom instruction and student learning, or who assist with the supervision of students during lunch and recess periods. The primary responsibility of paraeducators is to provide instructional support to identified special education students. Most often this takes place within regular grade level classrooms either on an individual or small group basis. Academic support staff provide instructional support within the classroom to all students that may need support at any given time through the school year. This is overseen by the classroom teacher, reading or math specialist or special education teacher. Duty clerks provide invaluable assistance in supervising children in our school cafeteria and on the school playground. Students must display the same respect and consideration to para educators, academic support staff, and duty clerks as they would to certified teachers, staff members, or school administration. We appreciate parental support in reinforcing this expectation for students to demonstrate respectful behavior to all adults at Spaulding School.

American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensures support for individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate education (FAPE), and are accommodated and employed without discrimination related to their disabilities.

It is the intent of the District to provide a free and appropriate public education to each Section 504/ADA qualified and eligible student with a disability within its jurisdiction, as defined in 28 CFR, Parts 35 and 36, of the Amendments to Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II and Title III.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities (both students and staff members) by school districts receiving federal assistance of any kind for any program or activity. Districts may not discriminate against any person with a disability, regardless of whether the program or activity after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

All individuals who are disabled or "handicapped" are protected under Section 504. However, individuals who have been determined to be "handicapped" under Section 504 may not be considered disabled under IDEA. IDEA, which can be viewed as a subcategory of Section 504, provides for special programming or placement, while Section 504 protects the rights of individuals with handicaps. Under IDEA, students are qualified for services under 13 IDEA disabling conditions; specially designed individual education programs are planned for each student by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams. Under Section 504, students with "handicaps" are entitled to special accommodations to ensure that they can participate in and benefit from public education and programs, and a 504 accommodation plan is designed for each student according to individual needs.

Section 504 is not an aspect of special education, but is, rather, a responsibility of the comprehensive general public education system. Unlike an eligibility system based on clinic categories of disabilities, Section 504 works on a more functional premise. Under 504 [29 U.S.C. & § 706(8)] a person is considered to have a disability if that person:

1.has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;
2. has a record of such an impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment

While Section 504 provides a means for preventing discrimination against students with disabilities, this does not mean that 504 plans must focus on the disabling condition or on addressing the disability directly. Rather, 504 plans offer a means for focusing on students' strengths, for capitalizing on what students bring to the instruction process - not on what they lack.

Students with disabilities, pursuant to Section 504 and/or ADA will be provided a free appropriate public education which may include, but is not limited to, providing a structured learning environment; repeating and simplifying instructions about in-class and homework assignments; supplemented verbal instructions with visual instructions; adjusting class schedules, modifying test delivery; computer-assisted instructions; using modified textbooks and tailoring homework assignments.

Should you have any questions regarding Section 504, please call either your child's school principal or the Civil Rights Coordinator.

Any eligible person, including any student, parent/guardian, staff member or other employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability may submit a written complaint to the district's designated Section 504 Coordinator within 30 days of the alleged occurrence.

The Section 504 Coordinator for the Suffield Public Schools is Diana Kelley.

Dr. Diana Kelley, Director of Special Services
Suffield Public Schools
350 Mountain Road
Suffield, CT 06078
Telephone: 860-668-3800

STUDENT RECORDS

The Suffield Board of Education complies with applicable regulations regarding confidentiality and access to all student records. The Board shall implement procedures that ensure strict confidentiality of student records while providing proper parental and/or student access to records. The Assistant Superintendent of Schools is considered as the custodian of records and will ensure that students' records are kept confidential. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The record's custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

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

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

Parents/guardians of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee such as an administrator, teacher, support staff, Board of Education member, attorney, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The parent's/guardian's or student's right of access to and copies of student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requester has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents, and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process.

Parents/guardians or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the staff of the main office or the office of the superintendent. A fee may be charged for the cost of the copying materials. Parents/guardians may be denied copies of a student's records: (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent/guardian fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents/guardians are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written parental request, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge to the parent/guardian.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent/guardian objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the school administration within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph,
e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

Military recruiters or institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students' names, addresses and telephone listings, unless a parent/guardian or secondary student aged 18 or over requests in writing that such information not be released.
The District will release to the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) the names, addresses, telephone number and grade levels of students (unless the District is informed by September 15 of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student) provided such information is to be used by the PTO for its own school activities or school business.

When a student moves to a new school system or charter school, the District will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the Requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.
The district's FERPA Privacy Officer is the Director of Special Services for Suffield Public Schools.

STUDENT/TEACHER CONTACT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

We work diligently to limit class interruptions to achieve the most effective and efficient instructional time for all students. Your cooperation in refraining from interruptions during class time is greatly appreciated. If you find it necessary to bring something to your child during the school day because he/she forgot an item needed for school, we request that you drop the item off at the front lobby/foyer. The item(s) will be delivered by a staff member of Spaulding School.

Children are not permitted to make or receive calls except in an emergency as determined by the main office staff. We understand that parents/guardians may want their children to carry a cellphone to and from school to improve communication and student safety, and we support this practice. However, the current Board of Education policy advises us that during the school day, student cellphones should be turned off and kept out of sight, as these devices can serve as a distraction and can lead to both unwelcomed and unsafe activities. We will appreciate parental support in reinforcing this policy with their children.

If you find the need to make contact with a teacher during the school day, we request that you do so by SeeSaw or email. Classrooms cannot be unsupervised, and therefore teachers are not able to respond to a telephone call when class is in session. If a teacher receives a phone call, Main office staff will take a message and give it to the teacher or staff member. When the teacher is available, your call will be returned.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

The district maintains procedural guidelines for suicide prevention and intervention in response to at risk behaviors by students, (i.e. Suicidal ideation, commentary or self-injurious behavior). The school faculty receives information and in-service on suicide prevention annually. Please refer to Board policy and regulation 5141.5 for additional information.

SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY/NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex attitudes or behaviors;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individual with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6.legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. income; or
8. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.

In addition, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey that is to be administered by a school to a student, prior to its use. Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of any survey that will be given to their children.

Parents will be notified of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance administered by the school and which is not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students. Parents will be given an opportunity to opt their child out of the exam. Hearing, vision and scoliosis screening are not subject to prior notifications.

The District will not collect, disclose or use personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or providing it to others for that purpose.

TEACHER AND PARAEDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested as to whether the child is provided service by paraeducators and their qualifications.

TECHNOLOGY

Computer Resources

Each Kindergarten student is issued an iPad, and all students in Grade 1 and Grade 2 are issued a Chromebook, thus providing a 1:1 digital environment in which every student has access to a school-issued iPad, Chromebook or a District-approved device. District resources have been invested in computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly-computerized society. The use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents/guardians will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that e-mail communications and the use of district computers are not private and may be monitored by staff. Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property, or at a District-sponsored activity unless the posting

is approved by a teacher. The District will not be liable for information posted by students on social media websites (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, etc.) when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment.

The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of the District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such material.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful, or inappropriate for students as defined in the *Children's Internet Protection Act* and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Students using technology resources must follow school rules, as well as all applicable Board policies, particularly the District's Responsible Use policy.

By signing off on this handbook you are consenting to students under the age of 13 to have a school-issued Google account, which is required to log in to the device.

Electronic Devices and Games

The use of electronic devices, such as but not limited to, cell phones and smart watches, are prohibited during the regular school day. Students are allowed to bring technology devices to school and use them only at the discretion of their teacher as tools for learning. These items will be collected by teachers at the start of the day and stored in the classroom.

Students are not allowed to use their devices to take pictures of others, make phone calls, send text messages, or access social media during the school day.

Students found to be using any electronic communication devices in violation of Board policy and school rules shall be subject to disciplinary action. Further, a student may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing written or electronic material, including internet material and blogs, that cause substantial disruption to school operations or interfere with the rights of other students or staff members.

The sending, sharing, viewing or possessing pictures, emails, or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form on cell phones or other electronic devices is prohibited in the school setting and subject to serious disciplinary action.

Responsible Use Policy

The computer technology exists to support the educational mission of the district to promote educational excellence in the district by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The use of this equipment provides great opportunity, but it also places a responsibility on all students. All students have the responsibility to use the equipment in a considerate, ethical, and lawful manner. The right to use this equipment may be revoked at any time by the school administration if deemed necessary.

Students must accept the Responsible Use Procedure (RUP) form before the student is allowed to use the school computers. Students are provided with Suffield Public Schools accounts. The use of the Internet must be in support of education, research, and school sanctioned projects. We expect students to afford each other the same respect on the Internet that they do while interacting in person and to respect Suffield Public Schools and its property. The school reserves the right to examine any files on the school computers. Students should not trade or try to thwart passwords or represent themselves as anyone else in any form of electronic communication. Students may not participate in chat sessions of any kind.

No personal accounts (including but not limited to AOL, Hotmail, MSN, Yahoo, Gmail, etc.) are to be accessed on school computers. Students and parents/guardians should be aware that e-mail communications and district computers are not private and may be monitored by staff. Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful, or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The failure of any student to follow the terms of the authorization form, or the RUP, will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

We expect students to respect copyright laws and academic honesty. The RUP further clarifies these guidelines. Technology is continually changing and the policy in this handbook reflects the Board of Education policy. Please refer to the district website for the most current information.

TEXTBOOK/DEVICE CARE AND OBLIGATIONS

Students are responsible for the care of books, supplies, and technological devices entrusted to their use. Textbooks, technological devices, and other materials will be assessed for damages upon their return at the conclusion of the school year. In accordance with state law, the school reserves the right to withhold report cards, determine a loss of privileges, or refrain from reissuing school materials or devices until the student pays for or returns the textbooks, library books, devices, or other educational materials.

TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental and family engagement involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs and opportunities for parents and family members to participate in the education of their children.

TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS

Parents or guardians withdrawing their child from school must notify the school office one week in advance of their last day. At that time, they will be given forms to complete, which include a formal written statement of withdrawal and a release of records form.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the District Business Manager who may be reached at the Central Office. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

VACATIONS

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations. Student absences for reasons of a family vacation or trip that takes place when school is in session may be considered "unexcused absences," in light of the attendance guidelines shared previously in this document.

VIDEO RECORDING ON THE BUS

The District has installed video recording equipment on school buses and in common areas of the school building to monitor safety. Tapes will be viewed by the school administration when necessary. Students violating bus or school conduct rules will be notified and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the school's discipline policy. Videotapes shall be treated as protected student records under the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*.

VISITORS TO SPAULDING SCHOOL

Parents/guardians and other visitors are welcome at Spaulding School. All doors that open to the outside of the school remain locked in order to preserve the safety and security of students and staff. Upon arrival, visitors are expected to check in at the main lobby/foyer. If they choose to enter the building beyond that point, they must enter their Driver's license into our security machine to receive a visitor badge. The visitor badge expires daily and must be reissued each time you visit the school. We appreciate the support of all visitors as we focus our efforts on ensuring the safety of everyone during the school day.

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

All visitors who intend to observe a child's instructional day must schedule this through administration. A notification must be given 24 hours in advance and cannot exceed one hour of time every-other month. Visitors will be expected to sign a confidentiality agreement and must be accompanied by a staff member for the duration of the observation. Audio taping, videotaping or photographing classroom activities by visitors are disruptive to the educational process and may invade the privacy rights of students, and therefore are not allowed.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted. Visits cannot interfere with the educational program of the school nor interrupt teaching activities.

WELLNESS

In advancing student achievement, the Board of Education recognizes the strong connection between academic performance, health and wellness. The Board embraces a district-wide culture aimed at enhancing student outcomes and decreasing childhood obesity by promoting health and wellness in schools for students and staff. Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the Board's Wellness Policy, the District's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. Federal and state standards will be met pertaining to all foods and beverages available for sale to students. A sequential program of physical education is provided, in addition to time in the elementary school day for supervised recess.