

# Northwest Primary School

## Family Handbook

### 2015-2016



## Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to another exciting year at Northwest Primary School! The faculty, staff, and administration have high expectations for our students and ourselves. With the help of our students' families, we will help the children here do great things and learn to love school.

As Principal of our learning community, I want to assure everyone that I am dedicated to the continued focus of creating the best learning experience for students as we possibly can. The simple philosophy "***Every Child, Every Day!***" sums up the approach that we have taken and will continue to take in guiding all of our decisions and programs. I believe, along with the dedicated faculty and staff, that a positive partnership between home and school is key to student success. We must work together to help our students on their educational path of becoming confident and competent learners and citizens.

The faculty and staff at Northwest are second to none when it comes to dedication and professionalism. We are all very fortunate to be blessed with such a caring and focused group. Please take the time to get to know the adults that are teaching your children. You will be impressed. Every adult in this building is working to ensure that our expectations for behavior and work are consistent. As part of the "Responsive Classroom" approach to education, every member of our faculty is responsible for each child that crosses through our doors – and responds with a deep level of understanding and respect in their interactions.

We hope that you will take the time to become *deeply* involved in your child's education. That involvement is the greatest way to model for your child that school is very important. Some basic pathways to involvement are:

- ✓ Follow the teacher's lead with homework, projects, and reading.
- ✓ Support your child with a regular place and time for him/her to do homework each night.
- ✓ Volunteer at school.
- ✓ Attend school functions.
- ✓ Communicate with your teacher at least monthly.
- ✓ Become active in the Parent Teacher Collaborative (PTC).
- ✓ Speak with your child about school EVERY DAY.
- ✓ Be sure that your child is well rested, nourished, and clothed.
- ✓ Contact the school with any questions or concerns.

**Please take the time to read through this handbook. Feel free to contact me at school or make an appointment to sit down and talk. Please also join us at our annual Open House, where we will hold a "Title 1 Meeting" and review school services and supports available for all children.**

Sincerely,

Kristin A. Hubert, Principal

## Introduction

This handbook is meant to give you a quick overview of what our school is, how it operates, and some ideas on how we can all work together to improve your child's primary educational experience. It also includes information regarding school and district policies, procedures, and practices. Policy and procedure manuals are available for review at the school and the district central office. Because we are constantly critiquing our efforts policies, procedures, and practices may be updated during the school year.

Please take the time to review this handbook carefully. Remember that we are all on the same team trying to educate your children to be the brightest and best students to pass through our doors.



## Rutland City Public Schools

### **Primary Program**

#### Northeast-Northwest

*It is recognized that the early years of a child's education are the most critical of all. With this belief, the mission of Northeast Primary School and Northwest Primary School is to develop, support and enhance an environment in which all children become proficient readers, writers and mathematicians in a setting that ensures respect for oneself, each other and learning. To this end, the Primary Program:*

- **Adheres to the principles of the Responsive Classroom model, which provides for consistency in behavioral expectations school-wide and fosters students' resiliency and responsibility for their actions**
- **Provides comprehensive reading instruction based on research and incorporating a range of skill development including Wilson phonics/phonemic awareness and multiple opportunities to write and to read a variety of quality literature**
- **Focuses on both basic skills and problem solving multidisciplinary themes provides comprehensive instruction in mathematics**
- **Provides social studies, science and enrichment opportunities based on district curriculum**
- **Provides high quality professional development to its administrators, teachers and staff in order that current research supports instructional practices**
- **Invites parents and community members to participate fully in the education of their children**



## Northwest Primary School

*Hours: 8:30-3:20*

*(Please note that dismissal time for bus riders depends upon bus arrival at school.)*

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Children may enter the building at 8:30 a.m. for breakfast. Students who do not have breakfast go directly to the playground.

Adult supervision begins on the playground at 8:30 a.m. On rainy mornings, or when the temperature falls below 10 degrees ambient or below zero with the wind chill, children may enter the building at 8:30.

Students may enter classrooms at 8:50. **Students arriving after 9:00 will be marked as “tardy.”**

Please remember that teachers are involved in meetings or preparing for the day and may not be in their classrooms until the busses arrive. Students should NOT be dropped off before 8:30, when supervision begins. To leave your child unsupervised before 8:30 may put him/her in an unsafe situation.

**Breakfast program: 8:30-9:05 (If busses arrive late, children will be given breakfast when they arrive.)**

### **School Day**

It is important that each child have the benefit of a full day's learning in school. **The school day ends at 3:20 and, unless there is an emergency, children are not dismissed earlier.** If you must pick up your child before 3:20, please go to the office and sign your child out. He/she will be brought to the office to meet you. **Please note, we will no longer “pull students” from class to have them wait in the office for parents. All students will remain in class, learning with their peers, until a parent or authorized adult arrives to sign them out.**

**We must ask visitors to remain in the office so we know who is in the building, both for safety reasons and so that instruction is not interrupted with visitors congregating in the hallways outside classrooms.**

If you are expected at a particular classroom in the building, you will be given a visitor's badge to wear so all will know you have signed in at the office.

### **LUNCH PERIODS**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Lunch /Recess</b>
1	12:00-12:30
K	12:30-1:00

# Hot Lunch and Breakfast Cost

The cost of Breakfast and Hot Lunch is:

	Regular	Reduced Cost ( <i>for those qualified</i> )	Adult
Breakfast	\$.75	\$.25	\$1.50
Lunch	\$1.40	\$.40	\$2.50
Milk	\$.40		

**To put money in your child’s account you may send in cash, but we advise making a check payable to “Sodexo.”**



## **Visitor’s Parking**

Our parking lot has minimal off street parking for those visitors who stop in during school hours. Please note that during drop off and pick up times (8:30-9:00 and 3:15-3:35) the traffic lanes in the parking lot will need to be free and clear of parked automobiles. The drop off and pick up procedure has been outlined later in this handbook.

**Visitors must use the one “main entrance” between the gym and the office. ALL VISITORS MUST BE BUZZED INTO THE FRONT OFFICE DURING SCHOOL HOURS. We appreciate your patience and focus on a safe and secure school.**



## **RECESS**

Please dress your child according to weather conditions. Children will be expected to be outdoors each day for short periods of time. Teachers often have assigned duties during recess, and there are no provisions for supervising children who wish to remain indoors.

For safety reasons certain types of equipment are not allowed on the playground. These include: skateboards, skates, bats, hard balls, CD players and radios. Children should not bring these items, or any item of substantial value, into school.

If a child has a chronic health problem, he/she may remain indoors during recess only if the school receives an original doctor's written or signed order with reasons and expected duration requested.

## **COLD WEATHER GUIDELINES**

Children are always expected to come to school dressed for the weather. In the event of very cold weather, children should always wear a warm jacket or snowsuit, snowpants, warm socks, mittens/gloves, hat and scarf, and any other apparel as appropriate and necessary. All items should be labeled with the child's name.

The Rutland Public Schools has set a 10 degree ambient temperature limit for children to go outside to recess.

When the temperature is close to 10 degrees, the local weather is monitored on the internet. Thermometers are also used to determine the temperature on the playground prior to recess. Recess supervisors send children in to the nurse if they appear to be very cold or if redness or white patches are noticed.



## Attendance



**Compulsory attendance is required in Vermont by law between the ages of six and sixteen.**

Student attendance is extremely important. Not only does your child need to be here to take advantage of the learning opportunities, but they also need to learn at this early age that attending is critical. **Students that come to school every day will do better in school.** We expect your child to be in school **every day.**

Normal childhood illnesses may keep your child out of school a few days a year (3 to 5). More than this indicates a problem. If your child is out more than this, he/she should be under a doctor's care. Please communicate to the school any health issues that your child may have so that we can support them.

The building Principal determines whether an absence is excused or unexcused. An unexcused absence is considered truancy and will thus be reported to our Attendance Officer. The Rutland City Board of School Commissioners and the Superintendent require and expect that students attend those days that school is in session.

**Following is the procedure to be followed when a child is absent from school:**

1. If your child is absent, please call 773-1946 extension 1778. If a child has not arrived at school, and we have not received a phone call, we will call you. If there is no answer, your child will be marked unexcused.
2. Parents must send a signed and dated note, along with the child's name and reason for the absence when the child returns to school. This is a Vermont State regulation. If a student is home sick for more than 3 days, he/she must have a doctor's note.

## **Vacations**

Attendance is important for your child's school success. When a child is absent, the continuity of learning may be interrupted and it is difficult for young children to catch up on missed instruction and on-going projects. We urge parents to plan family vacations around the school calendar. However, in the event that a parent needs to remove her/his child for more than 3 days, please follow these guidelines for requesting an excused absence when other arrangements are not possible:

1. If your child will be out of school for more than three days, you will need to obtain a form from the school secretary.
2. The completed form should be given to the principal for review and approval.
3. Parents will need to develop a plan that demonstrates that the trip will have educational merit. Consult your child's teacher for suggestions.
4. The primary responsibility will be with the parents and student to make up the regular classroom work missed during the child's absence.
5. Under no circumstances will excused absences be granted for more than 10 days.
6. The student's attendance will be used as criterion to determine whether an extended absence should be approved.
7. Approval for long-term absence needs to be made in advance, and removing a child for a trip without following the above procedure will result in unexcused absences and truancy.

## **Doctor's Appointments**

Please schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours. It is difficult but they will do it. It is very disruptive to your child's educational program when they are late, leave early, or miss the middle of a day.



## CURRICULUM

*Our curriculum is based on the the Common Core State and Next Generation Science Standards. Copies of the K-12 Standards and the Rutland City K-12 Curriculum can be found in our school library.*

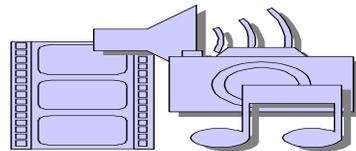


Reading is taught through an approach that integrates listening, speaking, reading and writing, called the Four Blocks Framework. These areas interrelate and support the development of literacy. The teaching of phonics and decoding skills, using the Foundations/Wilson Reading System, in conjunction with Four Blocks, is stressed and occurs in the meaningful context of good literature and poetry. A primary goal of our school is to ensure that every child becomes a competent and confident reader and writer during his/her K-2 experience. If a child has difficulty learning to read, support services are provided to help children with specific skills. Parents are notified when a child may be in need of support services.

Our Mathematics program follows the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the Vermont Grade Level Equivalents (GLEs). Our teachers use the Everyday Math Program to address these standards so students learn math “basics” along with how to use math in real life through problem solving.

Science and Social Studies, along with Language Arts, and Mathematics are integrated and taught through developed Thematic Units.

## “SPECIALS”



**Along with the core curriculum, students receive weekly instruction in Art, Library skills, Music and Physical Education.**

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

The Library Program focuses on developing an interest in and excitement about reading and books, provides instruction in using the library (learning center), and in selecting books for reading in the classroom and at home.

The library is accessible to all children throughout the week for book exchange, and independent learning. The use of available computers, equipment, software and materials to further develop personal interests and to compliment and expand on classroom lessons is also available throughout the day.

Music is a lifelong process that affects every corner of our world. Students are offered the opportunity to experience music in a variety of ways. Class activities include rhythmic development, awareness of the singing voice, introduction to instruments, the use of rhythm instrument accompaniment, development of listening skills, creative movement and appreciation for the works of various composers. Each child is encouraged to sing to the best of his/her ability and to actively participate in all music activities. Children demonstrate their learning through either a holiday or spring concert each year.

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



## **HOMEWORK**

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At Northwest we believe that homework is an integral part of each student's educational program. Homework is an extension of classroom work and reinforces the concept that education is a life-long process. Homework also affords parents a way to acquaint themselves with the school program and their own child's educational growth. **All parents will receive a weekly/monthly homework sign off sheet, which parents should sign each night to indicate that they have taken the time to review the contents of their child's homework folder.**

**KINDERGARTEN:** A weekly/monthly list of suggestions will be provided to parents, offering suggestions, strategies, and activities to assist with your child's development. Please read to your child daily for at least 15 minutes.

**GRADE 1:** Homework becomes an expected part of the student's educational program. Emphasis will be on math and literacy. The amount of homework

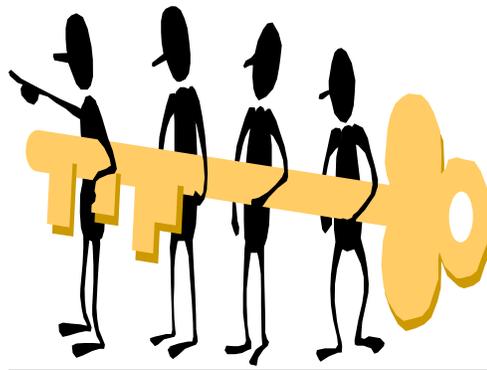
suggested is 10 minutes per night. Please continue to read with your child daily for at least 15 minutes. Bedtime is often a good time for reading.

**GRADE 2:** Homework continues to be an expected part of the student’s educational program. Emphasis will remain on math and literacy. The amount of homework suggested is 15 minutes per night. Please continue to read with your child daily for at least 15 minutes.

*Incomplete homework assignments have a negative impact on a student’s ability to benefit fully from his/her educational program. Please note that a failure to complete homework will result in consequences for the student.*

### **Responsibilities of Parents**

- To cooperatively support this portion of the educational program through encouragement and involvement with your child.
- To provide a consistent and appropriate place and time for your child to do homework.
- To sign the homework sheet indicating that your child has worked on the given assignment.
- To communicate to the teacher about any problems your child is experiencing with homework assignments.
- To read daily with your child for a minimum of 15 minutes.
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### **STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)**

The Vermont Department of Education requires that every Vermont public schools offer instructional support team services to children at risk of failure (Act 157). Northwest School has developed a procedure that provides teachers, specialists, parents and the school community access to a multi-disciplinary team. The team uses problem solving techniques to assess needs, identify resources, and develop specific remedial or supplemental strategies to accommodate all students. The purpose of this team is to assure each child’s success in a regular classroom setting. The team will continue its involvement and support by developing a follow-up plan that may recommend further adjustments, supports and/or additional resources and services. Parents will be kept informed throughout the process and may attend the SST meeting upon request.

## Student Services

In addition to the classroom teachers, we offer several support services to help children be successful. One of the most used services is that of our school nurse, Heather Perkins, R.N. She is on duty every day from 8:30 - 3:00. **Health services provided at Northwest School include the following:**

- Screenings – vision/hearing screenings and height/weight checks are completed annually for all students. Parents are notified if problems are identified or suspected.
- Medications – when necessary, prescription medications may be given by the nurse at school if there is written permission from the prescribing physician. All medications must be in their original labeled containers, and must be brought to school and picked up by an adult and NOT the student.
- Communicable Disease Control – all children, per VT law, must have a record of immunizations at school. The school nurse works with parents to ensure that all students are immunized and that accurate records are kept. If your child contracts a contagious disease, such as headlice, scabies, or a bacterial infection, this needs to be reported to the nurse. If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be sent home with an authorized person as listed on your emergency card.
- Health and Safety monitoring – participation in recess and physical education is recognized as an important function of the school day. Children will not be excused from participation unless a written note from the child's physician exempts the student from such activity.
- A final note on illness:
  - **Children that are sick or sent home by the school nurse need to be fever, diarrhea, vomit-free for 24 hours (temperature below 100F) prior to returning to school. Children who are ill and on an antibiotic need to have a full 24-hour dose of the medicine in their system before returning to school.**

### Special Education

Ryanne Spaulding, Jenna Boynton, Marcy Gillam, Valerie Clark, Catherine Troy, Gail Campopiano and Lindsay Zeitler are our Special Education teachers. They are each assigned to a number of classrooms. Stephanie Clarino is our Speech/Language Pathologist. She works with young children who need speech therapy. Bonnie Hayes, Ashley Brua and Sara Merrell (Speech), and Darlene Hetzel work with our youngest population (EEE). Special Education services are overseen by Kerry Coarse, the Director of Primary Support Services (EEE-2).

Counselors, Madison Akin and Megean Martin, provide in-school counseling and support for students in need. They also develop classroom interventions to help students develop the skills they need to be self-reliant and resilient. Mrs. Akin and Mrs. Martin play a critical role in the link between home and school for many families, and give guidance in securing support from outside agencies in Rutland County.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE RULES**

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

The Northwest Primary School's teachers and staff follow the Responsive Classroom model of behavior and expectations. Disciplinary procedures focus on helping a child learn from his/her misbehaviors and mistakes to understand the logical consequences for his/her actions.

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

- The right to a safe environment and the responsibility to act in a safe manner.
- The right to be treated with respect and courtesy and the responsibility to behave respectfully and be courteous toward all others in the school.
- The right to an education without interference from others and the responsibility to conduct oneself in a manner which avoids interference with another's education.
- The right to a quality education and the responsibility to conduct and prepare oneself in a manner that allows one to learn at highest level capable for that student.

### **School Standards of Behavior (STAR student) :**

1. **S** – Show respect to oneself and others at all times.
2. **T** – Treat others with kindness.
3. **A** – Always be safe.
4. **R** – Reach for the stars (do your best).

## **Unsafe and Inappropriate Behavior:**

Certain behaviors are absolutely inappropriate in a school setting and will not be tolerated. Examples include:

- Blatant defiance or disrespect toward any other person, child or adult.
- Deliberately harmful or aggressive acts towards another individual.
- Intentional and deliberate profanity.

Consequences for serious behavior of this nature will be directly related to the severity of the student's conduct and may include community service, loss of privileges, a parent meeting, and in extreme cases suspension or expulsion from school.

## **PLANNING ROOM**

The Planning Room will focus on both intervention and prevention by:

- Assisting identified students to develop more appropriate coping and social skills.
- Providing space/personnel to serve students who need to be removed from a setting due to disruptive behaviors. The Planning Room Supervisor will assist students in developing a plan allowing them classroom re-entry and the possibility of functioning more productively in the educational setting.
- Following-up with students to evaluate the effectiveness of their "STAR Success Plans."
- Following up with classroom teachers regarding student progress.

## **PLANNING ROOM REFERRAL PROCESS**

1. First referral will be made by a staff member. The referral will occur only after the teacher or staff member has addressed the child's behavior with little success, the behavior is creating an unsafe situation for other children, or the child is belligerent or disrespectful. The Planning Room Supervisor will process the situation with the child and develop a plan to correct the situation. A copy of the plan will be sent home by mail and the referral will be documented.
2. The second referral will be made by a staff member. The Planning Room staff will review past plans with the child and develop a new plan to correct the most recent problem. Parents will be notified by mail and possibly telephone.
3. The third referral will be made by a staff member. The student will develop a plan to correct their inappropriate behaviors. At this time, the parents will be contacted and asked to schedule a meeting with school staff. The meeting will focus on the child's behavior and the inability/unwillingness of the child to change the behavior. The focus of this meeting will be to help the child function appropriately in an educational setting.



## **School Volunteers**

We continue to have the services of a Volunteer Coordinator. Margaret Etori (786-1755) will assist us by finding needed volunteers for activities in the school or you can speak directly with your child's teacher to offer help or expertise in class. Among those activities are working in your child's classroom, participating in the Rutland Reads program, and working with students after school in one of many activities or groups that we will be organizing to help the children. Please consider at the very least, one day, even one hour of volunteerism at our school. **If each student had a parent that gave one day to volunteer in the school the benefit would be 2250 hours of volunteer time.**

### Examples of Daily Classroom Help:

- Homework folders
- Reading with children
- "Choice time" help

### Examples of Weekly Help:

- Books and Beyond
- Guest readers
- Supporting struggling students
- Lunchtime book club or reading

### Examples of Periodic Event Help:

- Organizing class festivities
- Enrichment/sharing a talent
- Helping with field trips
- School/community charity events

## TRANSPORTATION ~ GOING TO AND FROM SCHOOL



### Bus Rules

The Rutland City School Commissioners have stated that transportation to and from school is a privilege granted to pupils. This privilege is conditioned on students complying with the established rules. When the rules are ignored and a student endangers himself and/or fellow passengers, bus riding privileges shall be suspended according to the following procedure:

### The following bus rules are posted in the school busses:

1. Display the same conduct expected in the classroom.
2. Be courteous, do not use any profane language.
3. Do not eat, drink or chew gum on bus.
4. Keep bus clean.
5. Cooperate with driver's instructions.
6. Do not be destructive.
7. Stay in seat.
8. Keep head, hands and feet inside bus.
9. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats.
10. No physical aggression/abuse of others will be allowed.
11. No spitting or throwing of objects is tolerated.

### Consequences of Misbehavior on the Bus

First Offense - Bus driver reminds child of required correct behavior and notifies principal.

Second Offense – Driver writes a bus referral slip and brings it to the principal. Parents receive a written notice and phone call. The child meets with the principal.

Third Offense – Driver writes a bus referral slip and the child meets with the principal who will notify parent that child is suspended from bus for a period of five (5) days. Principal, parents and child will meet to discuss restoration of bus privilege.

Fourth Offense - Bus Incident Report is sent to the principal who will notify parent that child has been suspended from bus for remainder of school year.

### Immediate Suspension

Any student misbehaving in a manner that creates a severe safety hazard to him/herself, the driver, or other students, will immediately be suspended. The principal will inform the parent and set up a meeting of parent, child and principal to discuss behavior and the possibility of resumption of bus riding privilege.



## **Bus Information**

1. Whenever there is a change in the way your child will go home from school we must have a written note informing us of this change. If we do not receive this written note your child will be placed on his/her regular bus.
2. We cannot permit children who are walkers or car riders to occasionally ride school buses.
3. We cannot permit children to ride on other than assigned bus.



## **Walkers and Car Riders**

**Student Drop Off** ~ Parents wishing to drive their children to NW school in the morning will drop their children off by entering the driveway at the south end of the Northwest campus. Students must be dropped off directly to the sidewalk. After dropping off children, parents need to move out of the complex to allow for safe delivery of other children. If a parent wishes to stay at the school for any reason he/she will need to park on Pierpoint Avenue north of the school. Our parking lot is sufficient for our staff, but lacks space for visitors. Please note, in keeping with Vermont state law and Rutland City Public Schools' policy, all school grounds are idle free zones. Vehicles may idle for up to 5 minutes according to law and policy, but we request that all cars be turned off upon stopping on school property.

All **car riders** will be dismissed to automobiles in the traffic loop on the south side of the building. Students will be brought out via the sidewalk and dismissed to their parents or guardians. South Walkers will be dismissed from the same location. If there are any North Walkers that actually walk, they will be escorted to the corner of Pierpoint and Crescent.

**Whenever there is a change in the way your child will go home, a change in the person who will pick your child up, or a change in place child will be going after school, it is necessary that you send a note to the child's teacher providing this information.**

## **Inclement Weather and Emergency Situations**

### **Inclement Weather**

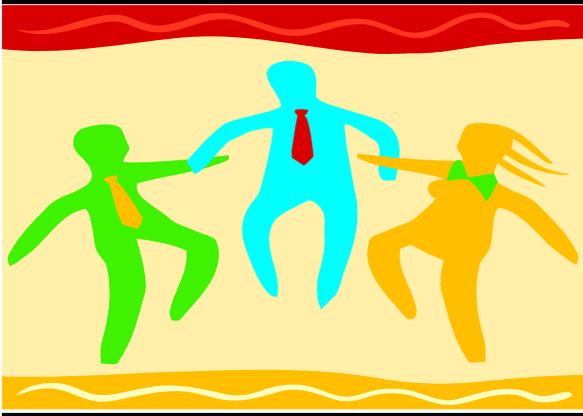
Announcement about the closing of schools will be made via an Infinite Campus Alert System, as well as over the following radio stations: WJJR, WSYB and WZRT. The decision to close schools will be made by 6:00 a.m. It is possible that certain weather conditions will suggest that we close ONLY the elementary schools.

### **Emergency Situations**

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

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

## **Parent Teacher Collaborative (PTC)**



**Northwest PTC Mission Statement:** The Northwest PTC strives to enrich the learning and programs of teachers and students, as well as the Northwest community as a whole.

This is a VERY important group. Involvement helps parents and teachers become more involved as partners in the educational process of our children. Meetings will be held throughout the school year, with information going home to families in students' homework folders.

**Programs that the PTC sponsor and help run include, but are not limited to:**

Books & Beyond – This is a reading incentive program that rewards children that fulfill a reading requirement by awarding them prizes. Volunteers are required to keep records for students in each classroom. This requires about one half day per month.

Enrichment – This group of parents and teachers review potential programs for presentation to our students. Programs may be dance, musical, theatrical etc.

Beautification – This group of parents and teachers plan and carry out the improvement of our physical plant. Recent projects include the construction of the climbing wall in the gym, bulletin boards for each room, and work on the district building project.

Parent Outreach – The PTC is focused on supporting parents so that they feel that they are an active part of each child's educational process. Therefore the PTC supports the Parent Outreach and Orientation events financially and in terms of effort.



## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

The most effective means of communicating your child's progress is face to face. Parent – teacher conferences are scheduled for **October and March**. No other report card or progress report will be sent home at these times. You must attend conferences to get information on student progress, and give us input that will help us with your child. We encourage parents to request additional meetings with their child's teacher if they have a concern or wish to have updated information on their child's progress.

## **VISITING OUR SCHOOL**

*Parents and other authorized guests are always welcome in our school. However, to help insure the safety of the children and to provide for an uninterrupted learning environment, the following procedures are required:*



1. Whenever you enter the school please use the main entrance.
2. Check in at office where you will sign in and be given a visitor's badge.
3. If you are bringing something to your child you may leave it at the office and we will be certain it is delivered to the classroom.
4. If you are removing a child from school before dismissal you will need to sign the child out at the school office.
5. No teacher shall allow any person to enter the classroom, or leave the school grounds with a child without a duly authorized dismissal slip.
6. If you wish to observe your child's classroom, or a particular part of his/her program we will be pleased to make arrangements. Communicate your interest to the principal or classroom teacher so a date and time can be set.
7. Teachers are available to speak with you (on some mornings) before school, during specials, and after school. The remaining times they are involved in direct instruction and should not be interrupted. Please consider this if you need to speak directly to a teacher.



## **OPEN INVITATION TO PARENTS**

- Come and have lunch with your child, from time to time.
- Bring your family to school events, to the public library.
- Enroll your children in extracurricular activities.
- Help your children to learn while you do things like shop and cook.
- Meet regularly with teachers and staff of your school.

Northwest Primary School is all of us. Together we can start our children on the road to lifelong learning!



### Unity

I dreamed I stood in a studio  
And watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind,  
And they fashioned it with care.  
One was a teacher, the tools he used  
Were books, music and art.  
One, a parent, who worked with a guiding hand  
And a gentle, loving heart.  
Day after day the teacher toiled,  
With a touch that was deft and sure,  
While the parent labored by his side  
And polished and smoothed it o'er.  
And when at last their task was done,  
They were proud of what they had wrought.  
For things they had molded into the child  
Could neither be sold nor bought.  
And each agreed that he would have failed  
If he had worked alone,  
For behind the teacher stood the school,  
And behind the parent, the home.

Cleo Victoria Stewart

## **PARENTAL RIGHTS:**

You have a right to:

1. Inspect and review records
2. Challenge content of records
3. Obtain copy of records

Parents have the right to request information regarding the credentials of their child's teachers. They can request the teachers' level of certification, areas of licensure, and "highly qualified" status. Requests for information should be made to the school building principal. Parents are also encouraged to make their opinions on services to students heard. "We invite all parents to present the school administration with any ideas or thoughts on services that would support all of our students within our school-wide plan."



## **School Policies**

**The following is a partial collection of policies regarding you and your child that you should review carefully. Please refer to the complete policy manual of the Rutland City Public Schools for all relevant policies. Policy manuals are available at Northwest Primary School and the Rutland City Public Schools Central Office located at 6 Church St.**

### **POLICY:**

#### **Parent Involvement**

The Rutland City Board of School commissioners and schools shall seek to involve parents in the education of their children by employing the strategies outlined in school handbooks and administrative procedure.

Coordination and integration of Rutland Public Schools' parent involvement strategies with other programs within Rutland City such as Head Start and other Federally funded or State run programs will be accomplished through the collaborative agreement in place at the primary schools.

**POLICY:** It is the policy of the City of Rutland Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs, or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments.

1998 7692

Students

**Subject: Head lice**

The psychological, social, and economic impact of head lice infestations can create a problem in the community. Recognizing a sizable number of cases exist from time to time, the Rutland Public Schools will take the necessary measures to reduce the loss of instructional time for those students involved. Rutland Public School District operates with a “No Nit” policy.

Headlice Procedure:

Regular head checks of all students are conducted by the school nurse and the staff at school. In the event that a child is found to have “live” lice they will be dismissed to home for treatment. In the event that a student has “nits” or lice eggs, parents will be contacted and the student will be sent home in the usual manner. In both cases, information is sent home and an adult must accompany the child to the nurse’s office on the following morning for a head check with the school nurse. Children must be “nit free” to return to school. The school and the school’s health services team offer guidance in treating head lice, as well as contact information for the Rutland VNA to help homes that have chronic lice problems.

1998      7613 / 6151

STUDENTS/PERSONNEL

**SUBJECT:      HIV/AIDS POLICY**

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is not transmitted through casual contact and, therefore, is not reason in itself to treat individuals having or perceived as having HIV differently from other members of the school community. Accordingly, with respect to HIV disease, including acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), the Rutland City School District recognizes:

- the rights of students and employees with HIV
- the importance of maintaining confidentiality regarding the medical condition of any individual,
- the importance of an educational environment free of significant risks to health, and
- the necessity of HIV education and training for the school community and the community-at-large.

## STUDENTS

**SUBJECT: Loss or Destruction of District Property**

Students and their parents or legal guardians are responsible to make restitution for district-owned property that is damaged, destroyed or not returned.

Failure to return textbooks and/or equipment in a timely manner will result in disciplinary actions until the textbook and/or equipment is returned and/or compensation made for the damaged, destroyed or lost item(s). Compensation shall be pursued through civil action when necessary.

The Rutland City Board of School Commissioners offers up to a \$200.00 reward leading to the apprehension, conviction and restitution of money by the individuals involved in sustaining damage to school property.

**Subject: Attendance**

The Education Law requires that the pupils enrolled in the schools of this District attend school on every school day unless legally excused. The educational program offered by this District is predicated upon the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of pupils with one another in the classroom and their tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. Unwarranted absences which especially occur at or near vacation periods have a highly adverse affect on the student as well as the entire educational program. Therefore, the Board of School Commissioners urges all parents to make every effort for their children to be in attendance.

Title 16, Section 1121

**Subject: Student Placement**

Placement within the system, with respect to building, teacher, and grade or special class, shall be at the discretion of the school administration and shall be subject to review and change at any time. In making such decisions, the administrator will be guided by performance in class, past records, parent/legal guardian and teacher recommendations, standardized test scores, and any other appropriate sources of information. The final decision shall rest with the school administration. Siblings and prior placement shall be considerations.

1988            7310  
STUDENTS

## ***Prevention of Harassment of Students***

### General Statement of Policy

#### **I. Purpose**

A. The Rutland City School District (“the District”) is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment in which all students are treated with respect. This policy involves incident(s) and/or conduct that occurs on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, or misconduct not on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.

B. The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(26) and amended by Act 91 of 2004, and to ensure that the District’s responses to allegations of harassment comply with 16 V.S.A. §565 as amended by Act 91 of 2004, Title VI and IX of the Civil Rights Act. It is the further purpose of this policy, when it is found that harassment has occurred, to ensure that prompt and appropriate remedial action, reasonably calculated to stop harassment, is taken by school district employees.

C. It is the intent of the District to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with and protects students’ rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The District respects and promotes the rights of students and others to speak freely and to express their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others. However, the District does not condone and shall take action in response to behavior that interferes with the learning of students and is not otherwise protected expression.

#### **II. Definitions**

##### **A. Harassment**

(1) “Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or gender identity that has the purpose or effect of objectively and

substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

(2) Harassment includes conduct which violates subsection (1) of this definition and constitutes one or more of the following:

(a) Sexual harassment, which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:

(i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education.

(ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

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

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

B. **"Complaint"** means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.

C. **"Complainant"** means a student who has filed an oral or written complaint to an employee or is the alleged victim in a report made by another alleging conduct and/or incident(s) that may rise to the level of harassment.

D. **"Employee"** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District, an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer.

E. **"Designated Employee"** means an employee who has been designated by the District to receive complaints of harassment pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 565(c)(1).

F. **"Principal"** means the building level administrator, or his/her designee.

### **III. Reporting of Student Harassment Complaints**

A. A student who believes that s/he has been harassed, or who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute harassment, should report the conduct to a designated employee, or to any other school employee.

B. When a student reports such conduct to a school employee, other than a designated employee, that school employee shall refer the report to a designated employee.

C. An employee who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute student harassment under this policy shall take prompt and appropriate action to stop the conduct and immediately report the conduct to a designated employee.

D. Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should report the conduct to a designated employee.

E. Consistent with this policy and 16 V.S.A. §565, the Superintendent or Principal shall develop procedures regarding the reporting of student harassment complaints and the District's handling of such reports.

F. The District shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall annually publicize their names, address, and phone number in individual school handbooks and other notices regarding this policy.

#### **IV. Procedures Following a Report**

A. Consistent with this policy and 16 V.S.A. §565, the Superintendent or Principal shall develop procedures for complaint response following a report, initiation of an investigation, investigation, independent review, and alternative dispute resolution provisions.

B. Independent Review: A complainant who desires independent review under 16 V.S.A. § 565(f) because s/he is either dissatisfied with the final determination of the school officials as to whether harassment occurred, or believes that, although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem, shall make such request in writing to the Superintendent. Upon such request, the Superintendent shall initiate an independent review, and shall comply with the District's procedures and any applicable rules on this subject promulgated by the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Education ("Commissioner"). The District may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

#### **V. Discipline and/or Corrective Action**

If after investigation, harassment has been found, the District shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment. Consistent with this policy, the District's Student Conduct and Discipline policy and 16 V.S.A. §565, the Superintendent or Principal shall develop procedures regarding

discipline and corrective action including final action on a complaint, retaliation, false complaints, and appeal provisions.

There will be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of harassment when the complainant has a good faith belief that harassment occurred or is occurring or for participating in or cooperating with an investigation. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **VI. Confidentiality; Notification of Results; and Record Keeping**

A. The privacy of (1) the complainant, (2) the accused individual, and (3) the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the District's obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.

B. Subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information, the complainant and the accused individual shall be informed in writing of the results of the investigation. If either the complainant or the alleged individual is under the age of 18, subject to the above limitation, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be provided with a copy of this policy and related procedures, notified when an informal resolution to a harassment complaint is attempted, notified when a complaint is filed, and notified in writing of the investigation results. An authorized school official may seek waiver of confidentiality rights in order to inform the complainant of remedial measures undertaken.

C. The Superintendent or Principal shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the District in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. The report of the investigation shall be kept for at least six years after the report is completed.

## **VII. Mandatory Reporting to State Agencies**

A. If a harassment complaint is made that conduct by a licensed educator might be grounds under the State Board of Education Rules for suspension or revocation of a license or endorsement, the Principal shall report to the Superintendent and the Superintendent shall report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner.

B. When a person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq., determines that a complaint made pursuant to this policy must be reported to the Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families, he or she shall make the report as required by law and related District policy. If the victim is a vulnerable adult, as that term is defined in 33 V.S.A. §6902(14), the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6903 and 6904.

C. Nothing in this policy shall preclude anyone from reporting any incidents and/or conduct that may be considered a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

### **VIII. Dissemination of Information, Training, Comprehensive Plan for Responding to Student Misbehavior and Data Gathering**

**A. Dissemination of Information.** Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and cocurricular activities, the District shall provide notice of this policy and its procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and employees. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of harassment. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the District.

**B. Training.** The Superintendent or Principal shall develop age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students and staff to help prevent harassment. Training may be implemented within the context of professional development and the school curriculum to develop broad awareness and understanding among all members of the school community. Staff training shall enable staff to recognize, prevent and respond to harassment.

**C. Comprehensive Plan for Responding to Student Misbehavior.** The District's comprehensive plan pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §1161a(a)(6) shall include provisions that promote the positive development of youth and actions to prevent misconduct from escalating to the level of harassment.

**D. Data Gathering.** The District shall provide the Vermont Department of Education with data requested by the Commissioner.

### **IX. Complaints to the Vermont Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Office of Civil Rights**

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted in the procedures accompanying this policy.

#### **Legal References: Act 91 of 2004 (2004 VT Laws Act 91)**

- 16 V.S.A. §§11(a) (26), 565 (harassment), 1161a.
- 21 V.S.A. § 495(5) (retaliation)
- 33 V.S.A. §§ 4911 et seq. (child abuse)
- 9 V.S.A. §§ 4500 et seq. (public accommodations; retaliation)
- 20 U.S.C. §§1681 et seq. (Title IX, Civil Rights Act)
- 34 C.F.R. Part 106
- 42 U.S.C. §2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
- 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99 (FERPA)
- Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education 526 U.S. 629 (1999)
- Franklin v. Gwinnett 503 U.S. 60 (1992)

Saxe v. State College Area School District, 240 F. 3d 200 (3rd Cir. 2001)

Policy Adopted: 2/8/2011

Supersedes policy of: 4/7/2009

