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Springfield School Board

Judith Edwards, Chair
Sam Coleman
Jeannice Garfield, Vice Chair
Larry Kraft
Marilyn Thompson

School Board meetings are the first and third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Springfield High School Library. In September they meet on Tuesday, September 2 and Monday, September 15 because of the Labor Day holiday. All are invited to attend.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

The Springfield School Board encourages public participation at its meetings. All meetings of the School Board or its subcommittees will comply with the Vermont Open Meeting Law. All actions of the School Board shall take place in open session and the deliberations leading to Board action shall likewise be conducted, openly, except matters discussed in Executive Session. When the pressure of Board business is severe, or when a large number of people wish to speak on matters before the Board, reasonable rules may be used to insure that meetings are conducted in an orderly fashion and that the business before the Board is completed in a timely manner.

The Board will provide opportunities for public participation at its meetings prior to board action on any item on the Board agenda in accordance with procedures developed by the Board.

BOARD COMMITMENT TO NON-DISCRIMINATION

The board recognizes its obligation to respect the legal rights of all students, parents, employees, applicants for admission or employment, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the school district. The Board will seek to comply with all applicable federal and state non-discrimination laws. The Board will not unlawfully discriminate against any person or group on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, disability or age.

The following Notice of Non-Discrimination will be given to appropriate recipients as required by law.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, employees, sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment, and all unions and professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Springfield School District (District) are hereby notified that the District does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, or place of birth, in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, services, and activities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II) prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1973 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Age Act) prohibits discrimination on the basis of age. Any person having inquiries concerning the District's compliance with the laws that prohibit discrimination as indicated is directed to contact the Director of Special Education, Springfield Supervisory Union, 60 Park Street, Springfield, VT 05156, tel. 802-885-5141, ext. 13, whom the District has designated to coordinate its efforts to comply with these laws or to Dr. Frank Perotti, Superintendent, ext. 16. In addition or instead, inquiries concerning Section 504, Title II, Title VI, Title IX or the Age Act may be directed to the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, JW McCormack POCH, Boston, MA 02109-4557, tel. 617-223-9662, TTY/TDD 617-223-9694 or 4097.

Discrimination Complaint Procedure

The following procedures are established to provide avenues of redress for any student, parent, employee or citizen who feels there is evidence of the school district's failure to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Wherever possible, reasonable effort shall be made promptly to resolve any complaint of discrimination under any of these Acts on an informal basis with those closest to the source of the problem.

Step 1. If informal resolution is not possible, the complaining party shall file a written complaint within 10 business days of the alleged violation with the Building Principal (if the complaint relates to a building-based discrimination issue), or with the District Non-Discrimination Coordinator (if the complaint relates to the Supervisory District or otherwise has District Supervisory District-wide application), or designee. The Principal/Non-Discrimination Coordinator shall investigate the complaint, and shall provide a written response to the complaining party within 10 business days of the receipt of the written complaint.

Step 2. If the complaining party is not satisfied with the outcome of Step 1, (s)he shall file a written request for review with the Superintendent. The Superintendent (or designee, which may be the Non-Discrimination Coordinator if not involved in Step 1) shall review the investigation/decision and shall make such further inquiry as appears necessary, and shall issue a decision within 10 business days.

Step 3. If the complaining party is not satisfied with the outcome of Step 2, (s)he shall file with the Superintendent a written request for a hearing with the Board of School Directors at its next regular meeting (or other time agreeable to both parties). The Chair of the Board shall conduct the hearing at the Board meeting, and either or both parties may be represented by counsel at their own expense. Consenting witnesses may be heard and questioned by the Board. Hearing shall be in executive session, unless a public session is requested by the complaining party. (Where the hearing involves a student and the complaining party is not the student or the student's parent, federal and State confidentiality requirements shall be observed.) The Board shall render a decision in writing within ten business days of the hearing. This decision shall be final and binding within the jurisdictional limits and authority of the board.

Instead of, or after completing the above procedure, a complaint may be filed with, or inquiry may be made to, the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), JW McCormack POCH, Boston, MA 02109-4557, tel. 617-223-9662, TTY/TDD 617-223-9694 or 4097. The above procedure does not have to be exhausted before going to OCR. Generally, a complaint must be filed with OCR within 180 calendar days of the last act of alleged discrimination.

The District Non-Discrimination Coordinator is the Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, Dr. Vincent Hawkins, 60 Park Street, Springfield, VT 05156 802-885-5141 ext. 22.

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a broad civil rights law regulated by the Office of Civil Rights. It provides that "No other-wise qualified individual with a disability i the United States...shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance...29 U.S. C.Section 794(a) (1998) Section 504 defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activity (including activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working),
2. Has a record of such impairment, or
3. Is regarded as having such impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Springfield School District recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, that include the responsibility to identify, evaluate and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services.

If a parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he or she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The person in this district who is responsible for assuring that the Springfield School District complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American Disabilities Act is:

Peter C. Nagle
District 504 Coordinator
Springfield School District
c/o Elm Hill School
Springfield, VT 05156
pnagle@ssdvt.org
802-886-5154

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

In order for a school system to understand what it is and where it is going, it is necessary that it start with a statement of its basic beliefs.

Beliefs

We of the Springfield School System believe all individuals are unique, vital, and have fundamental rights. Basic to a student's success is the development of a strong sense of self-respect. Essential to the development of self-respect is the knowledge that each student is capable of giving and receiving love. Each student learns and grows in a developmental process. By the choices that he or she makes, each person has the freedom and responsibility to create his or her reality.

Environment

In order to implement these basic beliefs, a clean, safe environment must exist within the schools. In order for learning to be fully realized it must be purposeful, challenging and worthwhile. Students, staff, parents and members of the community will be treated with respect and dignity. Students' individuality and creativity will be nurtured. Each student will meet daily successes. Students will be encouraged to explore new ideas and failures as well as their achievements. Students will be provided with the skills and tools necessary to function as productive members of society. Schools are an integral part of the community and they will encourage community awareness and involvement.

Outcomes

As our vision is realized, students will think critically and creatively. They will be prepared to deal with ethical issues, values and cultural differences. They will appreciate the arts. They will have a sense of responsibility for the preservation of the natural environment. They will be challenged to fulfill their potential. They will acquire the talents and the skills to succeed in a competitive environment. They will leave our schools as functioning adults with a sense of direction, self-worth and respect for others and the world around them.

STUDENT LEARNING

Students work to develop new skills and knowledge each day. As they practice their scholarship, teachers work with them individually and in groups to teach more and more advanced skills - thinking, reasoning, analysis, reading, writing, science, mathematics, social studies, history, geography, social communication, etc. Curriculum standards (which are aligned with Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities) and guidelines identify student expectations for learning in each subject. As students show what they can do each day, teachers are engaged in ongoing assessment of each student's progress.

Elm Hill School's commitment

Our Elm Hill School staff value and focus all their efforts on each child. We are committed to understanding each child's needs and developmental levels, establishing appropriately high expectations and preparing each child to achieve high academic standards. We request all students and their parents to commit to these expectations by signing a copy of the home-school compact (included with this handbook) and returning it to school.

Student rights

Each student has the right to receive an education that is meaningful and useful and which provides equal opportunity regardless of the student's race, religion, national origin, language, sex or ability.

Each student has the right to expect that the school will be a safe and healthy place to gain an education.

In matters of discipline, each student is entitled to treatment that is fair and consistent. If there is an infraction or offense, each student will be treated fairly and appropriately.

Student responsibilities

Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration, staff and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.

It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of all who are involved in the education process. Students must express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others. Any threats or violence will be addressed in a serious manner. No student has the right to interfere with the education of fellow students.

Parents as learning partners

Every day, ask your child how school was that day. Be a fellow reader with your children by reading to them, listening to them read and reading yourself. Tell stories and listen to theirs. Be sure there is a regular bedtime that allows for at least eight hours of sleep. Visit the library, become a volunteer reader at school, or provide a comfortable lap for a child who wants to read.

Help your child find a safe place to keep homework and library books so they always know exactly where to find them. Check over the homework to be sure it is complete and sign the notebook. If your child has homework or a book that is too difficult, please look at it with them or read it to them. Write a note to the teacher, call or ask to meet with the teacher.

Supporting your child's education happens in many ways. Attend PTA meetings to help plan activities, volunteer at school, attend school board meetings, help with projects. And enjoy your child's learning!

Homework

Homework is designed to help children academically and to promote good study and work habits. Homework can help a child develop the habit of independent study, give practice in basic skills and introduce the need for budgeting time. It is not given for the sake of keeping a student "busy." It is an extension of work introduced by the teacher in the classroom.

Assignments will be written down each day so parents and children can review them together. Generally, first graders are expected to do 10 minutes of homework, second graders to do 20 minutes, third graders to do 30 minutes, fourth graders do 40 minutes and fifth graders do 50 minutes each day, Monday through Thursday.

When your child has homework, you can help -

- Provide a quiet place with the necessary supplies.
- Set a time or times for doing the work. Consider doing it in two or three parts.
- See that it is completed in a neat and conscientious manner. Review it and sign the notebook.
- Help out when necessary, but don't take over.
- If it takes more than the expected amount of time, contact the teacher to discuss problems or concerns with the assignment.

Report cards and conferences

Report cards are issued in November, March and June. Report cards are one of many ways to let parents know what progress a student is making in school and how well he or she is adjusting to school life. If you have questions or concerns about your child's work, please contact the teacher at any time!

In order to fully discuss each student's progress, parents and students in first thru fifth grade are asked to meet with each teacher in November and March. The kindergarten teacher meets with just the parents. These times are specifically set aside to talk about the report card and any other issues related to school. We also encourage you to contact your child's teacher for a conference at any other time during the year.

Assessment: portfolios and standards tests

As part of the Vermont assessment process, second graders are given the Developmental Reading Assessment which is an English and Language Arts test. Fourth graders submit a portfolio of math problems to be evaluated by the teacher. Fifth graders submit a portfolio of their writings for similar evaluations. Students may select their best work to be submitted. Results of their portfolio work are shared with them and are available to parents. All third through fifth graders will also take a standards test (NECAP) to help evaluate how well each student performs in relationship to the math, reading and language arts curriculum standards and expectations for third through fifth graders nationally. This is part of The No Child Left Behind Act.

Your child's progress is assessed each day as teachers review work, conference with your child and correct papers. There is daily feedback on expectations and achievement.

Library

Our library provides learning materials, experiences and resources to support the educational plan of the school. The library media specialist provides students, teachers and parents with a comprehensive collection of books and other materials and establishes services, policies and procedures to maximize access and student learning. To insure open access to materials, the center subscribes to the curriculum policies and intellectual freedoms of the American Library Association Bill of Rights and follows well-defined policies to balance opposing philosophies.

The library operates on a flexible program schedule. All classes have a regularly scheduled time to check out books. In addition, individuals and small groups may come to the library more often. Our librarian, Susan Foster, will be integrating information gathering skills and literature into classroom curriculum. Our librarian also teaches formal classes on information-seeking skills including use of the Internet and other technology tools. Please discuss with your child and return the signed agreement regarding use of the Internet from the back of this handbook.

All books must be checked out if they leave the library. Books are circulated for two weeks and can be renewed, if necessary, or returned early. If a book is seriously damaged or lost, parents will be billed for replacement costs.

Technology

Our Elm Hill School Web page is located at: <http://ehs.ssdvt.org/Pages/index>. Check it out for sites related to our themes, homework helpers, upcoming events, nutrition, news letters and other school related information.

Educational Support Services

We have many supports and services available to our children to ensure their success in school. Our Educational Support Team meets each week to identify what services and assistance we need to provide to students.

Our school counselor works with classes, small groups and individuals to address social and leadership needs. Our Title 1 teacher provides different types of help in reading including Waterford Language Arts program. This includes a progressive individualized reading and writing skills program on computer with home support materials. The family support worker helps families as they interface with school. Special education services are available to those students who have a documented disability that interferes with their learning in areas such as reading, math, writing, speech, language, occupational therapy and behavior. A mental health clinician from HCRS Mental Health Services work in the school to meet the needs of students and families.

Tips for talking with kids:

- Be sure each of you is making eye contact.
- Say your message only once.
- Be a good listener yourself.
- Use the same tone of voice you would with an adult.
- Answer questions quickly, briefly and honestly.
- Acknowledge that you have heard what he or she said.
- Talk with children - not at them.

ATTENDANCE

All students are expected to attend school every day unless they are sick. School begins at 9:00 each morning and ends at 3:15 in the afternoon. All medical and other appointments should be arranged for after school or on vacation days in order to help students maximize their days in school and achieve their best.

Vermont law, 16 VSA ss1121, requires that "A person having control of a child between the ages of 6 and 16 years shall cause the child to attend a public school, an approved or recognized independent school or a home study program for the full number of days for which that school is held."

It is the policy of the Springfield School District to require student school attendance in accordance with the VT law in order to facilitate and enhance student learning. It is the responsibility of the student and legal guardians to ensure that the school attends school. Any student who has 7 absences will be subject to the district's attendance procedures.

Our school secretary is asked by the VT Dept. of Education to report on truancy statistics for Elm Hill. For the purposes of the school register and to promote consistency in data collection, the proposed definition of truancy is as follows: 1) Any student enrolled in school, regardless of age, is considered truant for each school day the student is absent without an acceptable excuse; 2) Excused absences include unavoidable absences due to illness, medical appointments, court appearances, observance of religious holidays, or a family death; 3) Excused absences will also include avoidable absences due to events such as family vacation when the school is notified before the date the student is absent; and 4) Tardiness, defined as arriving at school within an hour of the scheduled start time, is not considered an unexcused absence. At the end of the school year, the school registrar is asked by the VT Dept. of Education to report the number of students who were truant during the school year, the total number of truancy incidents, and the number of students truant for more than 5 days during the school year.

TRUANCY PREVENTION/ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Responsibilities:

Parents/guardians: Will notify the school, in writing, in advance of a student's absence, whenever possible.

School principal/attendance officer: Shall determine if it is a valid absence and attempt to contact a parent or guardian by telephone to confirm the cause of the absence. However, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school in advance if the student is going to be absent.

Building administrator: Shall be notified daily of student absences.

School: Shall annually document the cumulative absences on each student, as the number of absences will determine the thresholds for intervention as described in these procedures.

7 Days Absent:

After 7 cumulative absences during any school year, the building administrator or designee shall send a 7-day absence form letter, which outlines the consequences for subsequent absences and the warning of the possible prosecution for truancy.

The building administrator or designee will maintain documentation of all oral and written contacts regarding absences for each student. Such documentation may be used to support any filings pertaining to truancy, child in need of care and supervision, or other matters.

15 Days Absent:

After 15 cumulative absences during any school year, the building administrator shall require that the parent/guardian attend a school conference attended by representatives from the school, Attendance Project Coordinator, and other supports as requested by the family.

The student's absences will be addressed and a written plan that may include supportive services such as prevention, diagnostic, intervention, and remedial services, alternative programs and other school and community resources will be developed for ensuring the student's future attendance.

At this meeting, a person will be identified who will follow-up with the family and student as to any problems they have following through on the plan as outlined.

The conference may be followed up by a letter which outlines the plan agreed to for the student to return to school, and the action to be taken or home visit if the student has subsequent absences as outlined in these procedures. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Superintendent of Schools.

Parent/Guardian Does Not Attend 15-Day Meeting:

If the parent/guardian fails to attend the conference, school personnel will make a home visit or other contact with the parent/guardian.

If school personnel determines that there was no valid reason for missing the conference, an affidavit regarding the absences will immediately be filed by the Superintendent of Schools and a copy will be sent to the Windsor County State's Attorney's Office. The Windsor County State's Attorney can pursue the matter as truancy or as a child in need of care and supervision.

20 or More Days Absent:

After 20 cumulative absences during any school year but before 30 cumulative absences, the school will, at its discretion based on dealings with the student and parents/guardian, file an affidavit concerning the absences with the Windsor County State's Attorney's Office.

The building administrator shall notify the parent/guardian that the filing has been made with the Windsor County State's Attorney's Office and the possibility of criminal prosecution for truancy or a petition to determine if the student is a child in need of care and supervision.

The court could determine that the child is in need of care or supervision under 33 V.S.A. 5517 and 5528, which could potentially result in loss of custody as the most serious consequence.

Absence

If a child is sick, will be late or is unable to attend school, please call the school at 886-5154 before 9:00 a.m. and let us know. If no call is received, we will make three attempts to call you to notify you that your child is not at school and make sure that he or she is in safe care. Upon returning to school after an absence, the student should bring a note explaining the absence. Students are responsible for making up missed work.

When children must be taken out of school early, parents need to go to the office to sign them out. **DO NOT** go to your child's room and take your child out of the building. For safety reasons, we need to be sure your child leaves with the proper adult.

Arrival and dismissal

Bus students - After exiting from the bus at school, students go directly to the playground unless they need to get breakfast.

Students driven to school - Students should be dropped off by 8:45, **no earlier than 8:35 in the morning**. Please drop off the students near the back doors. Students should go directly to the playground unless they need to get breakfast.

After school pick-up - Students will meet their rides immediately after 3:15. For safety reasons, please follow the parking helpers directions and signs. Please do not park next to the building - you must park in the marked parking spaces. Because of our current situation, parents may pick children up at the back entrance. **Please do not arrive before 3:00 to pick up your child. While many parents enjoy coming into the building at the end of the day, at times the hallway becomes extremely congested with adults and small children socializing. Fire regulations require that we keep the hallways clear in the event of an emergency situation. This is not the time to talk with your child's teacher. The last few minutes of school are valuable and it is important that the teachers are able to focus on their students. We understand that unforeseen situations will occur occasionally to prevent you from picking up your child on time, but please be aware that your child will be enrolled in the LEAP program after 3:30 if this happens more than just a rare occasion. This will be at your expense.**

Bicyclists - Students may ride their bicycles to school provided they:

- observe safe riding practices (helmets are strongly recommended).
- walk their bicycle on the school grounds.
- park their bicycle in the front of the building.

We recommend that bicycles be locked while at school. Bicycle riding is a privilege which will be revoked for failure to observe the above rules.

Early dismissal or change of plans

If parents need to take a child out of school early, please notify the office in writing or by phone. **Come to the office to pick up and sign your child out.** In the interest of safety, we need to know where all students are during school hours.

Children may not ride home with persons other than their parents unless written permission is received from a parent.

Bus students who do not wish to go home by bus, must bring a note from their parent(s) giving this permission. Parents may write one note giving permission for the entire year.

Cancellation of school, late opening or early closing

If school is canceled, opened late or closed early due to inclement weather or some unforeseen circumstance, it will be announced over radio stations: 104.3 FM, 1480AM, 98.1FM, 100.5FM & 106FM and also on SAPA TV. If school closes early, we will follow your directions as indicated on the form included with this handbook. Please sign and return the form to school.

Visitors, guests and volunteers

Visitors, guests and volunteers provide new perspectives and vitality in our school. We welcome volunteers for as little as an hour a month or as often as daily. You may help in classrooms, the library or computer lab, read with children, make classroom materials, help with projects, share a special talent or teach a new skill. We make best use of volunteer help when we can schedule it with the teacher in advance either with the teacher or our volunteer coordinator.

Student guests are welcome if prior permission is granted by the classroom teacher and principal.

For safety and security reasons, all visitors must report to the school office. A visitor (a person not employed by the school system) must report to the school office and receive permission to be on the school grounds. Visitors must wear a "Visitor Badge". Any person on school property who has not registered with the school office is illegally on school property and is to be asked to identify himself properly or to leave the school grounds. If the visitor refuses to leave the school grounds or creates any disturbance, the principal has the authority to request aid from the law enforcement agency.

Moving or transfer to another school

Please notify the school of any change of address or telephone. If a student moves out of town during the school year, parents must come into the office and sign a release form so the student's records may be sent to the receiving school. It is the district's policy that all records are mailed and not given to the parent to deliver.

Elm Hill School Discipline

1. We believe that discipline is:
an ongoing teaching and learning process
is everyone's job: student, family, school, and community.
2. We believe that discipline:
teaches responsible decision making
establishes clear expectations
is fair and preserves dignity
meets the needs of the student and community
3. We believe discipline promotes:
a safe, caring and protective environment
responsible choices
success

We expect that all members of our school will follow class, lunchroom, bus, playground, and hallway rules. We expect everyone to remember to treat others the way they wish to be treated. We expect all people to act in a way that will allow for the educational process to continue, and in a way that promotes a safe school.

If a child is disruptive in the class, the student:

- (1) receives a classroom warning
- (2) has a classroom time out to get composed
- (3) is sent to a time out in a buddy classroom

If the behavior continues or the disruption was of a dangerous nature, the child is sent to the principal/planning room for a time out and a discussion of what happened, how the behavior can be changed, and retribution for the parties disturbed. If the student returns to the principal, he or she remains the rest of the 1/2 day or day with the principal doing his or her work out of class. A behavior notice will be sent home discussing the situation and asking for the parents to discuss the matter with the child.

If the behavior is reoccurring, a meeting or phone conversation with the parents will be arranged. The child may also be brought up to the EST team and/or the Guidance Referral Team.

After school time may be used to support the student with academic or behavioral needs. Parent would be contacted before a child stays after school.

POLICIES ON DISCIPLINE

The Springfield School District recognizes that a disciplined atmosphere is conducive to a healthy learning environment. In order to achieve this objective it is necessary for students to develop a sense of responsibility toward themselves, toward others and toward the school.

The basic rules and regulations necessary for the proper functioning of our schools are clearly written and explained to the students. Students should understand the need for the standards of behavior and that the consequences of their own behavior can be either positive or negative.

Throughout the district consequences for inappropriate behavior are spelled out and dealt with specifically in ways that best fit the maturity of the students. In some instances it is necessary to identify the special needs or problems of a specific student to determine more suitable consequences for him or her than those described in the school system's rules and regulations.

The district staff and the community recognize that there are multiple forces impinging upon a student, shaping both behavior and attitudes. It is important for the school, parents and community to work closely together to be supportive of one another as we educate our youth. When a student's behavior is clearly detrimental to his or her well-being or to the school program, he or she may be dismissed from school by action of the School Board.

This district policy statement summarizes the district's standard of behavior for all students in all schools.

Equity

Every student at Elm Hill School:

- Has the right to a safe, supportive and respectful school environment.
- Has the responsibility to contribute to a safe, supportive and respectful environment.

Student behavior

In order to ensure a safe and orderly environment where all students can learn, Elm Hill School has the school wide "Golden Rule": **Treat others the way you want to be treated.** There are other school, lunchroom, playground and classroom rules that will be displayed.

Matches, fireworks, knives, weapons, explosives and other objects unsafe for school are not permitted at school and may be cause for dismissal or expulsion from school.

Each adult and child is responsible for discipline in the school and must work together to ensure the safest possible school environment for everyone. .

Severe Behavior Plan

When a child hurts another child or an adult or is extremely disrespectful toward an adult or another child, there are different consequences.

1. Parent is called in immediately for a conference with the principal. Repeated offenses will result in out-of-school suspension.
2. Following an out-of-school suspension, parents need to bring their child in the following morning to meet with the principal to make a plan for the child and a clear consequence if the behavior is repeated.

Suspension and Expulsion

Students may be suspended from school by the principal for serious or repeated violations of school policy or disciplinary rules, or for other conduct not defined by rule which is deemed by the principal to be inappropriate, disrespectful, or disruptive to the school. Suspended students are suspended from all extracurricular activities. Students are not to be on school property during the suspension period other than during the school day if the student is serving an in-school suspension. Failure to abide by this procedure will result in an additional suspension, subject to separate notice and opportunity to be heard as set forth below.

When student misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school, the superintendent or principal may, with the approval of the school board, suspend the student for longer than 10 school days or expel the student.

Suspension and expulsions of students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, shall be carried out only in accordance with the requirements of those laws and related State law, including Vermont Board of Education Rule 4312 and successor provisions. See Board Policy "Long Term Suspension of Students with a Disability Under Special Education Laws or Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973" (Policy F3).

Bomb Threat Policy

The Springfield School District has adopted a comprehensive policy on what to do in the event of bomb threat. Copies are available from the building administrator or the superintendent's office. While we intend to respect the legitimate privacy interests of all persons, it is lawful for school authorities, within constitutional boundaries, to conduct reasonable examination of personal property on school grounds, including but not limited to lockers, desks, backpacks, and automobiles. In the event of a bomb threat, such items may need to be searched in order to assure the safety and protection of people and property.

We also want all members of the school community to know that any academic time lost as a result of a bomb threat will be rescheduled, either on a weekend, vacation day, or following what would otherwise be the end of the school year.

In addition, under State law, the making of a bomb threat is a very serious criminal offense, punishable for even a first offense by as much as 2 years in prison and a \$5000 fine. The making of such a threat may also lead to civil liability.

Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination and is not tolerated. Some examples of harassment include:

- Verbal - offensive language, insults or threats, hurtful jokes, unwanted flirtations.
- Nonverbal - offensive objects or pictures, offensive sounds, insulting graffiti or other writings.
- Physical - unwanted touching, chasing or presence in another person's space.

Discrimination

It is the policy of the Springfield Schools and the State of Vermont not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin or handicapping conditions. Neither children nor adults may be discriminated against on the basis of any of the above in:

- Use of school facilities
- Class placement
- Class and school activities
- Student rules and awards
- Counseling and guidance services
- Health and other school services

Section 504 is an Act which prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activity (including activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working);
2. has a record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Springfield School District recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the program and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he or she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

If you think you have been harassed or discriminated against in school or have any questions,

- talk with your teacher or school counselor or
- speak with the Elm Hill Principal
or Dr. Vincent Hawkins, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment - 885-5141 ext. 22

These people will listen to you and help you to form a plan to resolve your problems. The plan may be informal or include a formal process including investigation by a Title IX coordinator.

Consequences

Any student who harasses or discriminates against another student will have disciplinary actions taken against him or her which may include in or out of school suspension.

Threats of Violence/Destruction

Springfield School District policy prohibits students from making oral or written threats and or threatening actions directed (1) at school personnel (including all school staff, contracted service providers, and drivers of school buses), other students, and/or other people using school facilities, or (2) at buildings, grounds or other school facilities. Violation of this policy shall result in discipline, up to and including long term suspension and expulsion. In addition, restitution may be sought where the threat results in expense to the school, school personnel, or other students.

In order to maintain a safe environment for its students, employees, and others who use school buildings, grounds and facilities, and in order to maintain all school buildings, ground and other facilities in a safe and usable condition, the Springfield School District will treat any oral or written threat or threatening action by a student directed against school personnel and/or against other student(s), and/or against the school property and/or people using school property, as a serious offense.

In addition to verbal threats of violence spoken or written by a student to another student(s), school personnel, or school property, the following are other examples of actions which are prohibited by this policy:

1. The bringing onto school property, or the possession on school property, of a dangerous instrument, substance or other device capable of injuring people, or of doing damage to property. Prohibited items would include, for example, poisons, unauthorized chemical substance or an explosive device. (Note: Where the item fits the definition of “weapon” in the school weapons policy, that policy shall also apply to the offense.)
2. The bringing onto school property, or the possession while on school property, of an item which has the appearance of such a dangerous instrument, substance or device, or which the carrier/possessor claims to be such a device; for example, a fake bomb, a toy handgun or a rubber knife.
3. The phoning in or other communication of a bomb threat, or other threat to destroy school property.
4. Attempted or threatened physical assault directed by a student or staff member, at a student or staff member.
5. The pulling of a “false fire alarm”.

There may be circumstances under which an otherwise prohibited item may be permissibly possessed and appropriately used on school grounds. Examples might include possession and use in the chemistry lab of appropriately handled chemicals during a chemistry class, and appropriate use and storage of fake sword as a prop in a school play. A student shall limit his/her use and/or possession of such items to the purpose and circumstances for which use/possession is authorized.

Where a legitimate purpose exists for a student to bring such an item onto school property, the student should secure prior written authorization from the principal. The authorization should describe the item, the allowable purpose of bringing the item onto school property, the identity(ies) of the person(s) authorized to possess and use the item while on school property, and the authorized means and location of storage while on school property. Possession, storage or use of the item contrary to the items of the authorization may result in discipline pursuant to the terms of this policy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety is of utmost concern at Elm Hill School. We have limited mental and physical health services available at school. When student needs are greater than we can serve or are outside the scope of an educational setting, referral may be made to a variety of other resources within the community.

Safety

A major responsibility of the school is safety of the students while they are in our care. All playground areas are supervised when used by children during school hours. No rough or potentially dangerous play is allowed. Students are taught and expected to play carefully on the playground and on the equipment. Students with weapons or potentially dangerous toys may be subject to suspension or expulsion from school.

Children may not leave school property without permission. Once students are dismissed from school, they are expected to go straight home. Supervision of students on school grounds is provided by school personnel from 8:30 until 3:10.

Fire drills are held regularly to ensure that students can evacuate the building quickly should an emergency arise. If the school must be evacuated for a long period of time, students will walk to another school and parents will be notified through local radio stations.

Parents can help by emphasizing safety at home, encouraging safe manners while students walk to and from school and wait for and ride the bus, and teaching children how to ride bicycles safely. Please use great care while driving near schools.

Health services

The school nurse treat minor injuries, check students' vision, hearing, skin and scalps and ensure that the school is free of communicable diseases. They conduct periodic checks for head lice. In order to keep it from spreading, students found with head lice are sent home until properly treated. The classroom is checked after a report of live lice. It is important that parents regularly check their child's hair at home.

The school counselor and mental health clinician meet with individual students and with classes to teach students skills about personal safety and how to get along together. They are also available for limited time periods for individual and small groups of students and for parents.

A speech and language pathologist, a certified occupational therapy assistant and a physical therapist are available to provide services to students with specific needs in these areas. They also consult with teachers and students as needed.

No tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs or weapons are allowed on school property by children or adults.

Guidelines for keeping a child home sick

In order for children to do their best in school, they need to be healthy and feeling well. Our bodies fight illness best when rested and taken care of at the onset of symptoms. At school, we promote wellness and protect all students against illness. A child should stay home if he or she has had any of the following symptoms:

- a fever (temperature over 100 degrees) within 18 hours before school
- vomiting or diarrhea within 18 hours before school
- a profuse runny nose
- a severe persistent cough
- pink eye
- open infected sores (such as impetigo) which cannot be covered

It is the parent, not the child, who should make the final decision whether a child should stay home or go to school. A desire to be at school or "I have to go to school", are not the deciding factors!

A student may return to school if he or she:

- no longer has any of the above symptoms, including no fever, vomiting or diarrhea for at least 18 hours before returning to school
- has eaten a normal meal
- after strep throat, has been on antibiotics for 24 hours and has no fever
- after pink eye, has been on antibiotics for 24 hours and has no drainage

Medications

All over the counter and prescription medications must be kept in the nurse's office. If a child requires medication during school hours, it will be administered in the nurse's office only.

The school must have a written statement from the doctor or pharmacist detailing the method of taking any prescribed drug, the dosage and the time schedule to be observed. Parents requesting that a child take over the counter drugs (such as Tylenol or cough syrup) must state that in writing. The school must also have written authorization from the parent or guardian requesting that the school assist the child when taking medications and that the school be held harmless.

The health office has a limited supply of basic over-the-counter medications that are available if symptoms first appear during school hours. It is the parents' responsibility to provide cough drops, lozenges, acetaminophen, etc. to the health office to give to children with ongoing symptoms.

Physical Education

Physical Education classes will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Tuesday & Thursday Mrs. Ankuda, Mrs. Fry, & Mrs. Post's classes have P.E. and Wednesday & Friday Mr. Neronsky, Mrs. Carter & Mrs. Dexter's classes have P.E. There are several requirements for your child's participation in P.E. class.

1. Sneakers should be worn or brought to school on P.E. days. All dress shoes, sandals or clogs should not be worn to class. Comfortable, casual clothing is recommended. Dresses and skirts are not appropriate. If it is a continued problem, we will call home.
2. Due to space constraints this year, we will be having P.E. outside as often as possible. Be sure to dress children according to the weather. (A number of light weight layers are better than a T-shirt and a heavy jacket.)
3. No jewelry should be worn and all glasses will be left in your child's classroom.

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

The importance of proper conduct while waiting for boarding, riding or disembarking from a bus cannot be over emphasized. Any behavior that distracts the bus driver instantly endangers all. In the interest of safety, all pupils should understand, and parents are urged to impress upon their child(ren), the necessity for strict compliance with the bus rules.

Riding on the school bus is a privilege provided by the School Board. Any pupil causing undue disturbance or found guilty of violating school rules may lose this privilege. If privileges are suspended or revoked, it is the parent/guardians responsibility to be sure the pupil attends school.

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus at all times and is responsible for the conduct of the pupils while on the bus going to and from school.

Before loading:

- The school bus runs on a schedule. Pupils must be at pickup points on time. The bus driver is not expected to wait for stragglers or latecomers.
- Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus. Do not move toward the bus until the bus has stopped completely.
- Board the bus in an orderly manner with no pushing, crowding, shoving, etc.
- Be a good citizen. Show regard for the care and upkeep of the property near the bus stop.

On the bus:

- Take a seat immediately and remain seated.
- No more than three pupils may sit in one seat.
- Excessive movement, fooling, loud talk, profane language, horseplay, etc. will not be tolerated.
- Keep books, packages, coats, instruments and other objects out of the aisle. Aisles must be kept clear at all times.
- Pets or other animals are not allowed on the bus.
- No smoking, chewing tobacco, eating or drinking is allowed on the bus.

Pupil pickup and drop-off:

Pupils are to be carried from their home or bus stop directly to school and from school directly to their home or bus stop. All pupils riding on the school bus should understand that nobody will be allowed to leave the bus once they have boarded and started home, except at their regular stop or upon approval of a bus variation. (see bus variances)

Leaving the bus:

- Cross only in front of the bus after the bus driver, crossing guard or teacher has given you the all-clear signal.

Always walk.

Pupil eligibility for Transportation:

A. Pupils in K-5 living outside .6 mile (6/10th) limit from school or nearest stop.

B. Pupils who must walk in hazardous areas may be granted bus transportation upon approval of the Transportation Coordinator and/or Superintendent of Schools.

C. Pupils who, because of physical condition, are unable to walk, may be granted bus transportation upon the approval of the Transportation Coordinator and/or Superintendent of Schools. A doctor's certification will be required.

Dealing with Transportation Concerns:

When an **EMERGENCY SITUATION** arises -- such as a later bus, no bus, or your child was not on the bus -- you should first call your child's school. If the school personnel were unavailable to determine a solution, please call the bus garage a 886-3001 and relay your concerns to a staff person there. If no one is available, contact the Transportation Coordinator at 886-7827 and leave a message.

For **NON-EMERGENCY SITUATION** during normal business hours (8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.), you are asked to please call you child's school for resolution of your situation. If the school personnel are unable to help you, call 885-5141 ext. 27 to speak to Martha Tarbell, Transportation Coordinator.

In either an emergency or non-emergency situation, the school personnel, Central office staff and/or Transportation Coordinator will work with the bus company to resolve the issues.

AS EMERGENCY ISSUES OR CHANGES IN BUS ROUTES OCCUR during the normal school day, school principals and secretaries will be notified. There will also be announcements made on local radio stations: 104.3 FM, 1480 AM, 98.1 FM, 100.5 FM, and 106 FM and SAPA-TV (Channel 8). As time allows, parents will be called for the bus students affected by the issue or change. If an issue is known in advance, fliers will be sent home giving information about the issue or change.

Route Changes:

If you would like to request a route change or bus stop change, a "request for change" form needs to be completed. These forms are located at any school office, or call the Transportation Coordinator at 885-5141 ext. 27

Complaints:

If there are transportation issues/complaints, please refer them to Martha Tarbell, Transportation Coordinator, at 885-5141 ext. 27.

Violations:

Violations of bus behavior will be handled in the following manner-

First Referral- the bus coordinator will contact the building administrator. A letter will be sent to the parents. The building administrator will talk to the pupil.

Second Referral- the bus coordinator, after receiving a second referral, will contact the building administrator. the building Administrator will attempt to call and a letter will be sent to the parents. The building administrator will talk to the pupil. Building Administrator and/or transportation coordinator will determine the length of suspension from riding the bus (suspension up to one (1) week).

Third Referral - The bus coordinator, after receiving a third referral, will contact the building administrator. the building Administrator will attempt to call and a letter will be sent to the parents. The building administrator will talk to the pupil. Immediate suspension will be for the remainder of the school year. After 30 school days, parents may appeal to the transportation Coordinator.

Violations that interfere with the safe operation of the bus or endangers the safety of other pupils will result in immediate and indefinite suspension. Suspension will be based on the seriousness of the violation and conduct of the student. Pupil will reimburse the school district/bus company for any damage for which they are directly responsible.

Suspension from a bus includes all trips - regular routes, field trips, athletic, etc.

Requests for Bus Variations:

A request for a change in bus stops may be made by filling out a bus variation form which is available in your school office. the bus coordinator receives, reviews and approves (or disapproves) bus variations to avoid overload. the bus coordinator the forwards the variation to the bus company.

The principal may approve a parent's written request for a child to be discharged at another stop on the same route. both parent and principal must sign the request and the child can give it directly to the bus driver. types of requests we try to accommodate:

- Pupils going to "after school" work or child care
- Pupils going to service or community groups such as Scouts or 4-H
- Parents are working and will not be home
- Emergency needs such as parent away for funeral, hospitalization, etc.

Requests must be made out on a form that is provided by the school office at least two days prior to the change (if possible). telephone requests cannot be accepted for the safety of the children we transport. Requests to transport children for playtime visits, parties, etc. will not be accepted.

Field Trips:

In order to use the best resources to help students learn, we take students on field trips. any field trip outside of the Springfield town limit normally will use regular school buses and always require parents' specific permission for each trip.

A form is included with this booklet for permission for pupils to participate in activities which may take your child of the school grounds within the Springfield town limits. We ask you give your signed permission for these local activities for the entire school year.

Pupils who are suspended from riding the school bus can not ride a bus for a field trip.

FOOD SERVICES

Breakfast, morning snacks and lunch are available at school each day. The full cost of breakfast is \$1.00, snacks cost 50¢, and the full cost of lunch is **\$1.75**. Milk is 50¢. Free and reduced meal prices are available by application. If you believe you are eligible for reduced prices or free meals, or become eligible at any time during the year, please request a form from the office. An application is included with this packet.

Students may eat breakfast at school between 8:30 and 8:55 each morning. Lunch is served in two sittings, offering a hot lunch entree, a deli-type sandwich, salad bar or a pb&j sandwich with a vegetable, fruit and dessert. Students may bring their own lunch if they prefer. All lunch boxes and lunch bags should be clearly marked with the student's name.

Until we move back to Elm Hill, students will again be eating in their classrooms and are expected to use good table manners, dispose of their own garbage and remain seated until dismissed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dress

All students are expected to dress appropriately for the weather and their classes. No clothing depicting alcohol, violence, foul language, tobacco or other drugs is permitted. Appropriate clothing so not to distract from the learning process is also required. Shirts must cover bellies and cannot be “spaghetti” straps, skirts and shorts need to be fingertip length. Students that do not follow this code may be sent home to change. **Make-up is also not allowed. Nail and hair products should stay home.** We feel strongly that all of the clothing and make-up issues listed are not appropriate for children this age. We want the children to look their age so they will act that way as well. Inappropriate clothing or make-up causes a disturbance in and out of the classroom. If children come to school dressed improperly, you will be called to bring a change of clothing.

Cell Phones

Children will not bring cell phones to school unless there is a special situation which has been approved by the principal. Any cell phones will be held by the teacher until dismissal.

Lost and found

Please label all clothing, lunch boxes and notebooks so they can be returned to their owners. Found items will be kept in the gym. Please check there for any missing items. After a period of time clothing gets recycled to a local thrift shop.

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN OR PROBLEM

If you have any concerns regarding your child, please contact us. Begin your discussions with the teacher.

1. See the teacher. Make an appointment and discuss your concerns as soon as they arise.
2. See the principal. If the situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction by the discussion with the teacher, make an appointment with the principal.
3. See the superintendent. Should your concern require further discussion, make an appointment with the superintendent, Dr. Frank Perotti.
4. Meet with the School Board. If meeting with the above mentioned people does not satisfactorily solve your problem, you may request a meeting with the School Board.

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF DESIGNATION OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION, RIGHT OF REFUSAL and RIGHTS TO INSPECT EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

Schools in the Springfield School District may disclose designated directory information on students and eligible students without the prior consent of the parent of eligible students, and without any record of such disclosure. The following types of personally identifiable information have been designated directory information:

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

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

If you are an eligible student and are currently attending school in the Springfield School District, or if you are the parent of a student currently attending school in the Springfield School District, you have a right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of these types of information as directory information concerning your child or (if you are an eligible student) yourself, by providing written notice of your refusal, listing the type(s) of information which you refuse to have so designated, to the principal or the school your child attends (or the school you attend, if you are an eligible student), by September 15 of each year.

Annual notice to parents and eligible students regarding educational records

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This act gives the eligible student, parent or guardian the right to:

- inspect and review the student's educational records;
- make copies of these records;
- receive a list of all individuals having access to those records;
- provide consent prior to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's record
- ask for an explanation of any item in the records;
- ask for an amendment to any report to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights; and
- a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

This Annual Notification of Rights is only a summary of rights. Your rights to inspect and review education records, and the school district's duty to have your written consent prior to disclosure of personally identifiable information, are subject to limitations. In order to request inspection and review of your education record, or if you have any questions concerning your rights in this matter or if you wish to have a copy of the School District's policy, contact your school principal or Superintendent of Schools, Springfield School District, 60 Park Street, Springfield, VT 05156 or call 802 / 885-5141. Further details are contained in the school district's detailed student record policy and procedures, and in State and federal law. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Peter Nagle, 504 Coordinator for the elementary schools, at 885-5141 extension 16.

Parental Rights & Responsibilities

The School Board recognizes the value of providing information concerning a students' school participation and progress to both parents where the parents are separated, estranged or divorced. In such cases, the School Board and its employees will attempt to respect the legal rights of both parents with respect to involvement in their child's education, including access to records, educational decision-making, and notice and participation in school meetings and activities, as and to the extent provided by State and Federal law.

Upon written request to the child's school principal, the school shall subsequently and routinely mail to each joint-custodial and/or noncustodial parent copies of all school information which is normally sent home with the child. This will include copies of report cards, and class and school newsletters. These mailings should continue for the remainder of the school year in which the request is made. This service may be requested annually.

Parental Right-to-Know About Teacher Qualifications

Parents have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their children's classroom teacher(s) as below. Requests are to be made in writing to the school principal.

•Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

•Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State Qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.

•The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.

Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and if so, their qualifications.

(19)

(20)

(21)

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