

Canaan Elementary School
Handbook
2023 - 2024



Mascoma Inspires!
Build the path you want to take

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VISION, MISSION, & GOALS	3
CANAAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL	4
THE CES WAY	5
REGISTRATION INFORMATION	6
SCHOOL HOURS	6
WEATHER-RELATED OR EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES	7
ATTENDANCE	7
HOMEWORK	9
REPORTING SYSTEM	10
OPEN HOUSE	10
CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION	10
THE STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM	11
STUDENT CONDUCT	12
BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM	14
PLAYGROUND	15
ITEMS FROM HOME	15
PARTIES	16
TRANSPORTATION	16
FIELD TRIPS	17
FOOD SERVICE	17
SNACK	18
ACCIDENT & ILLNESS NOTIFICATION	18
IMMUNIZATIONS	18
MEDICATION	18
EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL FOR ILLNESS	19
STUDENT DRESS	20
LOST AND FOUND	20
LIBRARY BOOKS	21
PLACEMENT	21
PRESCHOOL	21
PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION	22
FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES	23
VOLUNTEERING	23
VISITING	23
CALENDAR	24
APPENDIX (BOARD POLICIES)	25

VISION, MISSION, & GOALS

Mascoma Valley Regional School District Vision

Mascoma Inspires! Build the path you want to take

Mascoma Valley Regional School District Mission Statement

We are a community that values creativity, curiosity and the pursuit of excellence, cultivating our strengths and interests to inspire partnerships in the district, community and the world beyond.



Canaan Elementary School Mission Statement

In partnership with parents and the community, Canaan Elementary School challenges our students to excel in learning

Canaan Elementary School Goals

- **COMMUNICATION:** Expand and improve communication within the building between cohorts of teachers (i.e.) Special Educators, Reading Specialists, Regular Education teachers and paraprofessionals
- **INSTRUCTION:** Expand focus on instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students
- **SUPPORT:** Expand the positive behavior support program to support all students with a focus on students that have experienced trauma
- **CULTURE:** Create a collaborative school pride movement that extends beyond the school into the district and community

CANAAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL

31 School Street, Canaan NH 03741

Telephone: (603) 523-4312; FAX: (603) 386-6883

Canaan Elementary School Website: <https://ces.mascomaschools.org/>

Administrative Team

April Guinness, *Interim Principal*
Debbie Shields, *Nurse*

Tammy Daley, *Administrative Assistant*
Amy Reiter, *School Counselor*

Special Education Team

Monica Cashin, *Special Education Coordinator*
Stephanie Smith, *Speech-Language Pathologist*
Rita Boyce, *Occupational Therapist*
Francie Prosser-Riessen, *Physical Therapist*
BJ Foster-Zehr, *Special Education Teacher*
Lisa Nevins, *Pre-K Special Education Coordinator*

Michelle Monfette, *Special Education Clerical Aide*
Aaren Dow, *Speech Assistant*
Laurie Hanks, *School Psychologist*
Heather Aube, *Special Education Teacher*
Cassie Johns, *Special Education Teacher*
Dawn Frenzel, *Special Education Teacher*

Unified Arts Team

Crystal Darling, *Librarian/Media Specialist*
Jason Jarvis, *Art Teacher*

Kerry Hughes, *Physical Education Teacher*
Megan Prince, *Music Teacher*

Grade-Level Academic Teams

<u>Preschool</u>	<u>Kindergarten</u>	<u>Grade 1</u>	<u>Grade 2</u>	<u>Grade 3</u>	<u>Grade 4</u>
Kyle Audett	Brandi Hughes	Maranda Bashaw	Melinda Fifield	Linda Landry	Kim Harvey
	Taylor Sullivan	Lisa Meyer	Danielle Sampson	Meghan Quinn	Sarah VanGorden
	Lynn Cutting	Katie Rafter			

Academic Support Team

Susan Johnson, *Reading Specialist*
Jeanne Gilmore, *Title I Math Tutor*

Sharon Lyman, *Reading Specialist*
John Connolly, *Title I Math Tutor*

ARRC Team

Allison Porecca, *ARRC Lead Teacher*
Meredith Melendy, *ARRC Para Professional*
Christy Marshall, *ARRC Para Professional*
Andrea Geoghan, *ARRC Para Professional*

Lisa Bill, *ARRC Para Professional*
Jessica Selby, *ARRC Para Professional*
Clayton Rogers, *ARRC Para Professional*

Para Professional Team

Margaret Battis, Sally Disbrow, Vanessa Durgin, Brenda Hall, Cassidy Jansch, Mary Langlands, Serena Lyman, Tonya Mansur, Jenna McAlister and LeeAnn Wilson

Facilities, Transportation, & Food Services

Corrado Paramithiotti, *Building Maintenance Supervisor*
Jack Kelley, *Day Custodian*
Emily Witt, *Night Custodian*

Sierra Bishop, *Transportation Coordinator*, 632-1199
Danielle Pushee, *Special Ed Bus Coordinator*, 632-5563
Keldah Sousa, *Cafe Services*

Other District Schools

CES: 523-4312 / FAX 386-6883

IRS: 632-4357 / FAX 632-4262

MHS: 632-4308 / FAX 632-5419

THE CES WAY

At the Canaan Elementary School we have three overarching expectations of our students that apply to all aspects of our program and all times of the day:

RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, and SAFETY



We are **SAFE, RESPECTFUL**, and **RESPONSIBLE** in the Hallway

- We stay to the right.
- We use quiet voices.
- We keep our hands down.
- We walk.

We are **SAFE, RESPECTFUL**, and **RESPONSIBLE** at Recess

- We keep our hands to ourselves.
- We help each other.
- We put away equipment.

We are **SAFE, RESPECTFUL**, and **RESPONSIBLE** in the Bathroom

- We use quiet voices.
- We do our business and wash our hands.
- We give each other privacy.
- We go right back to class.

We are **SAFE, RESPECTFUL**, and **RESPONSIBLE** in the Cafeteria

- We sit in our seats.
- We touch our own food.
- We clean up our messes.
- We use quiet voices and kind words.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The Mascoma School District has an online registration process. Parents will be emailed a link to fill in the registration. If you do not have access to the internet at home, you may call the school for help. **If information changes throughout the school year, please contact our office to update the registration system.** A birth certificate, immunization record, record of physical examination, and two proofs of residency are required when registering for school. Children will not be permitted to begin school until all of these documents are on file. Also note that only those students who are, or will become, five (5) years of age on or before September 30th of the current school year shall be admitted to kindergarten

SCHOOL HOURS

Student Drop-off

Please note that School Street is one-way only between 7:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M and parking along the left side of School Street is prohibited during those hours.

The school day officially begins at 8:00 a.m. Students may arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. and proceed to class. Prior to 7:30, there is no supervision for students. **For safety and health reasons, especially in winter, students will not be permitted on the grounds prior to 7:30.** Those students who arrive after 8:10 a.m. will be marked as tardy. All tardy students are to enter through the main entrance.



Cars should enter and exit the bus loop. Please do not pass a stopped car in front of yours. There are a lot of car doors opening and children crossing into school so this poses a safety issue.

Parents are welcome, even encouraged, to walk their students into school each day. We ask, however, that parents say goodbye to their children in the lobby. Allowing students to walk themselves to their classrooms helps foster independence and instills confidence.

Student Pick-Up

Upon dismissal from school, all K-4 students that walk home will exit from the front door of the building just after 3:00. All walkers that are not being met by a parent are to leave the grounds immediately and proceed with caution to their destinations.

Car riders are dismissed at 2:50. Parents who are picking up their children in a car should drive around the driveway to the right of the school building and join the car line. Your child will be brought to your car. This route is only available beginning at 2:45 P.M., as students are using the play area throughout the day. Once the buses start coming, this route is closed to cars, and parents will need to meet their children out front.

All people authorized to pick up your child must be listed on the registration and/or emergency forms. If, for some reason, you will be sending someone else to pick up your child, please call the office (523-4312) stating the person's full name and date of pick-up. Identification will be required if we do not personally know the pick up person.

Should a problem outside of school arise causing you to fear for the safety of your child, please report the problem to the school in writing with the necessary details. Should it be a question of custody resulting from a divorce decree or court order, please provide the school with a copy of the portion of the order that establishes who has custody.

WEATHER-RELATED OR EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES

School closings, delayed openings, and weather-related emergencies are posted on the school website, announced in the local media, and communicated directly to families via an automated phone system.



Delayed Openings

The superintendent may delay the opening of school by two hours. The school day would then run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Students are not to arrive at school prior to 9:30. If school is delayed, you will receive an email and/or voice message via *Messenger*, the district's alert system. Please make sure that you keep your phone numbers and email addresses up to date so that you receive these messages, should there be a delay. Please note that morning preschool is canceled in the event of a delayed opening.

School Cancellations

The decision to close school because of inclement weather will be made by the superintendent on the basis of conditions that exist within the district. If this should occur, you will also be sent an email or voice message via *Messenger*.

ATTENDANCE

If your child will be absent, please contact the school by phone at (603) 523-4312 prior to 8:30 a.m. This is a district policy instituted to safeguard children. We intend for the Canaan Elementary School to be a place where students learn and grow in a happy and safe environment. Consistent attendance is an important factor in achieving this end. Learning is interrupted when students arrive

late to school or are dismissed early. Furthermore state law requires that every person between the ages of 6 and 18 attend school.

Tardies

Students who arrive at school after 8:10 a.m. must report to the front office to obtain a tardy slip for class.

- 10 Tardies - Will result in the issuance of a letter expressing concern about the student’s pattern of late arrivals and its impact on his or her educational experience
- 20 Tardies - Will result in the issuance of a second letter and a meeting will be scheduled between the student, a parent/guardian, the guidance counselor, and the principal to complete an Attendance Contract.



Early Dismissal

If the need arises for you to pick up your child prior to 3:00 p.m., please notify your child’s teacher AND the front office by emailing or sending a note with your child stating the date, time, the name of the individual who will pick your child up, and the reason for the early dismissal. At the time of the dismissal please report to the front office to sign out and pick up your child. Identification will be required if we do not personally know a person.

Absences

In accordance with district policy, a *half-day* absence is defined as “a student missing more than 2 hours of instructional time and less than 3.5 hours of instructional time. Any absence of more than 3.5 hours of instructional time shall be considered a *full-day* absence.” (MVRSD Policy JH)

Excused Absences

In accordance with district policy, absence from school for any of the following reasons will be considered “excused absences:

1. Illness
 2. Recovery from an accident
 3. Required court attendance
 4. Medical and dental appointments
 5. Death in the immediate family
 6. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
 7. Such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Principal or permitted by law
- Any absence that has not been excused for any of these reasons will be considered an unexcused absence.” (MVRSD Policy JH)

Unexcused Absences

If a student misses more than 2 hours of instructional time without communicating appropriately with the school and/or without gaining the necessary sanction from an administrator, that student's absence will be marked as "unexcused."

- 5 Unexcused Absences - Will result in the issuance of a letter expressing concern about the student's lack of attendance and its impact on his or her educational experience
- 10 Unexcused Absences - Will result in the issuance of a second letter and a meeting will be scheduled between the student, a parent/guardian, the guidance counselor, and the principal to complete an attendance contract.

Vacations During Instructional Days (Not Scheduled Holidays)

It is expected that parents plan their family vacations during the non-school days scheduled throughout the year. With only 180 school days available in a 365-day year, it is important for students to attend and participate in all instructional days that are scheduled.

We appreciate that from time to time there are extenuating circumstances which can make attendance and timeliness challenging for families. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are ways in which we can help to support your child.

HOMEWORK

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development. If homework is to be used by teachers as part of a students' grade, the teacher will explain how such homework assignments relate to the teachers' grading system and communicate that to parents/guardians in writing. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience, and will not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

The following is an estimate of time spent on home study in addition to reading:

Grade 1	Will not exceed 25 minutes	2 nights/week
Grade 2	Will not exceed 30 minutes	3 nights/week
Grade 3	Will not exceed 40 minutes	4 nights/week
Grade 4	Will not exceed 45 minutes	4 nights/week

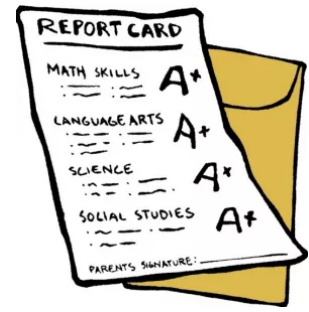


Parents play a vital role in helping each child develop important independent study habits:

- making sure the child has a workspace with good lighting
- making sure the TV is off and the child can work without disruption
- finding a regular time each night for the home study time so a routine develops
- talking regularly about home study assignments

REPORTING SYSTEM

Teachers report on a quarterly basis electronically through *Alma*. Parent conferences are offered at the end of the first and third terms. Additional conferences may be arranged to meet both parent and teacher needs.



OPEN HOUSE

Our annual Fall Open House is held in the month of October. Families are invited to meet teachers, visit classrooms, talk to community organizations and socialize.

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

Nearly all issues are appropriately and satisfactorily resolved in the first conversation with the staff member most directly involved in the concern. For those that are not, the chain of communication provides many ways to resolve an issue through meaningful conversation that will help to build understanding and trust.

1. **The first conversation should be with the person most directly involved. Students and parents should communicate school-related concerns in a conversation with their child's teacher, case manager, or school nurse.**
2. If the concern is not adequately resolved, a student or parent can arrange a conference with the principal.
3. Only after a student or parent has progressed from a conversation with the staff member most directly involved to the administration would it be appropriate to contact the superintendent, and then the school board.

Communicating with Staff Members: Teachers are accessible through phone or email. (A staff member's email address is the first letter of their first name, followed by their last name, and "@mvrds.org". Emily Smith's email address would be: esmith@mvrds.org). Teachers welcome and encourage direct communication with parents; however, if a parent calls during a period in which a teacher is instructing, the call may be forwarded to a voice mailbox.

THE STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM (SST)

These teams consist of the classroom teachers, school counselor, reading specialist, principal, and other invited personnel as needed. Parents/guardians or a staff member who have an academic, social, or behavioral concern about a child that impacts his/her education may access the SST. The teams may suggest accommodations or strategies for the classroom teacher or parents to try, or suggest testing to determine if there is a specific learning problem.

The Student Support Room offers support for students who require additional behavior intervention and is a gateway to additional resources for students in crisis or need. It is staffed throughout the day and is intended for proactive student breaks, scheduled check-ins, rewards for expected behavior, social/emotional group work, and the provision of social/emotional related services. The room is also a space for students to process after an incident has occurred and a space for students to serve detentions or suspensions if the behavior warrants consequence.



Accessing the Student Support Room Proactively

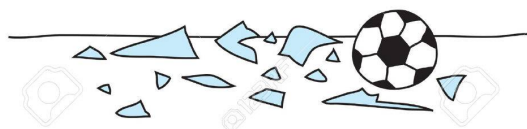
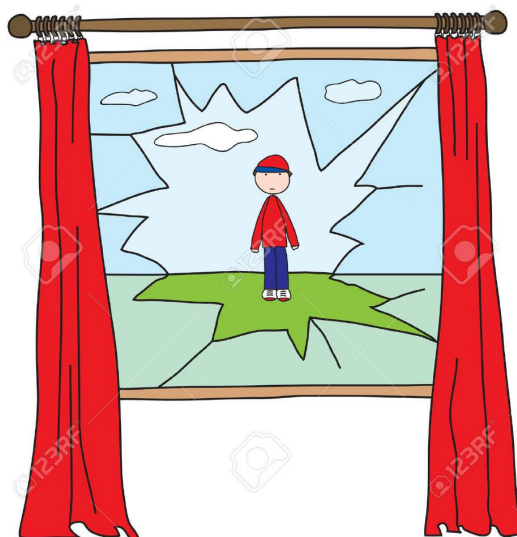
Breaks are *proactive* and are intended to head-off inappropriate behavior. Students taking a break have *not* yet committed a behavioral infraction. Breaks may be predetermined and scheduled as part of a behavior plan, or they may be impromptu and as needed. A student may need a break for any of the following reasons:

- student is anxious
- student is dysregulated
- student is acting out of character

Breaks may be initiated by a staff person, or they may be initiated by the student, after the student has been trained in how to ask for and take a break.

Accessing the Student Support Room Reactively

A student may be referred to the Student Support Room for a major infraction or for a minor infraction that has been addressed by the classroom teacher, properly communicated to the student's parent/guardian, and persists despite intervention at the classroom level. A teacher must complete a "Behavior Referral Form".



STUDENT CONDUCT

The Canaan Elementary School's discipline system stresses the positive aspects of acceptable behavior and acknowledges such behavior when it occurs. The system is intended to support positive self-image and an understanding and appreciation for such an image in the school environment.

We encourage each child to behave appropriately and to make smart and responsible choices. We strive to link clear expectations with logical consequences. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and respectful manner. It is important that you have a clear understanding of and confidence in, the efforts our school is making to maintain high standards of safety and conduct.



We hope that through a clear statement of behaviors and through clear communication with you, we can teach children that certain rules are necessary and important, that the behavior of each child must meet these standards, and that each child will be held accountable for his/her actions. Your understanding and support for these standards is essential. The basic premise of our disciplinary code is that all students have the right to learn and teachers have the right to teach.

Canaan Elementary School has a comprehensive school-wide discipline system that:

- teaches all students appropriate behaviors and problem-solving skills
- provides a rapid, specialized response to students with intense needs and those who are showing early signs of problems
- encourages good behavior choices, using recognition and rewards.

The school rules focus around children making wise choices in three areas: Respect, Responsibility and Safety. Canaan Elementary School students are expected to show respect, take responsibility, demonstrate courtesy, and have integrity. As a school, we continue to focus on a behavior matrix that deals with expected behaviors throughout the building. Children learn about the expected behaviors through class lessons, guidance classes, and modeling. Children's positive behaviors will be recognized and reinforced throughout the day by all staff members.

LEVEL I

Misbehaviors on the part of the student that impede orderly classroom procedures and interfere with the learning process. Individual faculty or staff members generally handle Level 1 misbehaviors:

Examples of Level 1 Misbehavior

1. Repeated failure to complete homework or class assignments, to follow teacher's directions, or to adequately prepare for class.
2. Abuse of hall or bathroom privileges.
3. Vandalism.
4. Wearing suggestive or inappropriate clothing.
5. Cheating or lying.
6. Defiant attitude and/or lack of respect for authority.
7. Unwanted touching or hurting of someone with any part of student's body or with an object.
8. Bringing unauthorized items to school such as objects to trade or sell, remote control toys, tools, trading cards, etc. This does not include those items specified in Level III misbehaviors.
9. Throwing objects (pencils, erasers, snowballs, food, etc.).
10. Teasing, name calling, or hurtful or insulting language.
11. Using inappropriate language, such as swearing.
12. Any other offense that would merit this level of disciplinary response.

Procedures

1. The supervising staff member or observer immediately intervenes and applies the most appropriate disciplinary option.
2. Since the frequency of occurrence can determine subsequent responses to the same infraction, staff members will fill out a SSR Referral Form.
3. Depending upon the misbehavior, parents may be contacted by the teacher.

Disciplinary Options/Responses

1. Documented warning.
2. Loss of recess or special privileges.
3. Parent and school counselor notification.
4. Lunch in a restricted area.
5. Recess in a restricted area.
6. Supervised after school detention.
7. Supervised before school intervention.
8. Supervised recess intervention.
9. Clean, repair, or replace damages to school property, as needed.
10. Confiscate unauthorized items.

LEVEL II

Level II student behaviors are those that are frequent and serious enough that they tend to impede orderly classroom procedures and the learning process. These infractions may require the intervention of administrative personnel because Level I interventions have failed to correct the situation.

Examples of Level II Misbehaviors

1. Repeated and/or flagrant violations of the Level I behaviors.
2. Showing flagrant disrespect or defiance of school personnel or students in action, word, and/or gestures.
3. Misbehavior at a school sponsored activity such as field trips, Destination Imaginations meetings, etc.
4. Theft, abuse, or threatening a person to obtain personal property.
5. Inappropriate language directed at another student or staff member.
6. Fighting, such as punching, kicking, hitting, shoving, etc.

7. Vandalism, defacing of school property.
8. Leaving school grounds without permission.

Procedures

1. The supervising staff member or observer immediately intervenes and applies the most appropriate disciplinary option. Staff members will fill out an SSR Referral Form.
2. Depending upon the misbehavior, parental contact through the principal may result
3. If an Incident Report is deemed necessary, the principal will request this of the supervising staff member. This report will be placed in the student's file.

Disciplinary Options/Responses (one or more may be utilized)

1. Repetition of Level I options.
2. Parent notification.
3. Restitution for damage to school property or an individual's property.
4. In or out of school suspension.

LEVEL III

Level III student behaviors are those that are directed against persons or property. The consequences of the behaviors put the health or safety of others in the school at risk. Level III infractions require the intervention of administrative personnel.

Examples of Level III Misbehaviors

1. Repeated and/or flagrant Level II misbehaviors.
2. Threats or acts of violence directed toward others or school property.
3. Indecent exposure.
4. Tampering with a fire alarm or fire extinguishers.
5. Unlawful harassment.
6. Arson.
7. Violations of the district's Tobacco/Drug and Alcohol policies.
8. Possession of explosive devices.
9. Possession of weapons.
10. Bomb threat.
11. Other serious infractions.

Procedures

1. The administrator initiates the disciplinary action after investigating the infraction that has been reported.
2. The principal meets with the student and confers with the parents about the misbehavior.
3. When appropriate, outside agencies are notified.

Disciplinary Options/Responses

1. Repetition of Level II options.
2. Referral to an outside agency for additional services.
3. School Board hearing that may result in suspension or expulsion

BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

Bullying is defined as “a single significant incident or pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another pupil which (a) Physically harms a pupil or damages the pupil's property; (b) Causes emotional distress to a pupil; (c) Interferes with a pupil's educational opportunities; (d) Creates a hostile educational environment; or (e) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the

school. Bullying shall also include actions motivated by an **imbalance of power** based on a pupil’s actual or perceived personal characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs, or motivated by the pupil’s association with another person and based on the other person’s characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs” (*MVRSD Policy JICK*). If deemed necessary, the principal will initiate a bullying investigation. If it is determined that a student has violated the District’s Bullying Policy, the following actions will be taken:

1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	Subsequent Offenses
<u>(K-4) Action:</u> 1 Day in-school suspension	<u>(K-4) Action:</u> 2 Days in-school suspension	<u>(K-4) Action:</u> 3 Days in-school suspension	<u>(K-4) Action:</u> 4+ Days in-school suspension
<u>Interventions:</u> -Referral to SST -Referral to outside resources	<u>Interventions:</u>	<u>Interventions:</u>	<u>Interventions:</u>

PLAYGROUND

The majority of our rules on the playground are framed in the positive. They tell students what they *should* do, as opposed to telling students what they should *not* do.

General Rules

- Have fun
- Share
- Problem solve
- Be Safe, Responsible, Respectful
- Wear weather appropriate clothing - coats, boots, snow pants, mittens, hat



ITEMS FROM HOME

Students are not permitted to have cell phones during school hours; if brought to school, they will remain in the office until dismissal. In addition, students may not bring playground equipment or personal electronic devices to school. Occasionally a teacher may request that children bring in something special from home for use in a particular activity. The teacher maintains sole discretion as to when toys from home may be taken out for use or display. The teacher also reserves the right

to confiscate a toy from home and return it directly to a parent or guardian, if that toy becomes a distraction to the learning environment.

PARTIES



If you wish to send in a snack for your child's birthday, please check with the teacher first as some students have dietary restrictions and some classrooms are restricted due to student allergies. We strongly encourage healthy snacks! ***Please do not distribute invitations to home parties at school.*** We are unable to give out addresses or phone numbers without parental permission.

TRANSPORTATION



All students, grades K-12, will be transported within the framework of the law, RSA 189-6, and school board rules on transportation. Information about bus routes and schedules can be obtained from school, the district website or from the superintendent's office. Routes will be posted prior to the start of school.

Students must be at their bus stop on time, so that buses may keep to their schedule. If a student does not typically ride the bus, or if a student needs to take a bus other than the one he/she typically rides, please email the front office or send a note to school with your child. The note must be signed and dated by the front office staff and then given to the driver.

Riding the bus to and from school is a privilege, not a right. The bus is considered school property and therefore an extension of the school day. While in transport, students are expected to honor CES behavioral expectations as well as any additional bus regulations. Distracting the driver or disrespecting his/her directives may impact the safety of everyone on the bus. All Bus Write-ups will be processed with students and the following consequences will be implemented:

- 1st Bus Write-up of School Year - Warning
- 2nd Bus Write-up of School Year - Assigned Seat at Front of Bus
 - (min. 1 week, up to duration of school year)
 - Parents/guardians will receive a copy of the Bus Write-Up
- 3rd and all subsequent Bus Write-ups - Suspension of Bus Privileges
 - (min. 1 week, up to duration of school year)
 - Parents/guardians will receive a copy of the Bus Write-Up as well as a phone call from administration

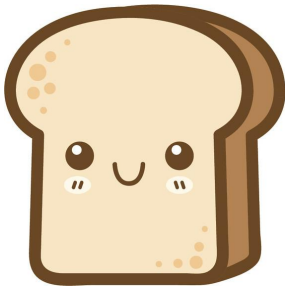
If suspended from the bus, the student's suspension would not begin until the day after parents are notified. Please note, a bus suspension is *not* a school suspension. Students are required by law to be in school and must find another way to get to school.

FIELD TRIPS

Students may go on nature walks around the school property from time to time. These do not require special permission from parents, but the school office is notified when the class leaves the building.

At the outset of each school year, a blanket permission form is sent home for “in-district field trips.” The majority of the classes in the school walk to the library, the local maple sugar shack and other in town locations that are covered by this form.

For all field trips on which students will travel outside the district, a separate permission form will be issued. Chaperones are sometimes needed to supervise small groups of students. Chaperones are required to complete a volunteer form, be fingerprinted by the SAU, and have a district issued photo ID. Please do not bring preschool-aged children when you chaperone on a trip. All students are expected to be transported by the school bus.



FOOD SERVICE

All Mascoma schools provide a hot lunch program. Students may participate in this program or bring lunch from home. Snack and lunch milk are also available. In addition, the Mascoma elementary schools provide a breakfast program.

Our school participates in a federally subsidized free and reduced-cost lunch program. We encourage all families eligible under the income guidelines to participate. Not only do the children receive a nutritious meal each day, but also the school district is reimbursed for each meal, thereby offsetting the cost of the program. Additionally, eligibility for many federally funded educational programs is based on the number of free and reduced applications. Please review the guidelines sent home on the first day, and if eligible, take advantage of the reduced prices and help the school receive additional funding at the same time!



The confidential *Free/Reduced Lunch Application* can be completed electronically at www.mymealtime.com or a paper copy may be obtained from the district website at <https://sites.google.com/a/mvrsd.org/home/mealtime>. We also encourage families to set up a Mealtime account in order to fund their student’s meals. You may also set up a low balance email notification.

For Free & Reduced application questions: Martha MacDonald 603 632-5563 ext 3004 or mmacdonald@mvrds.org.

SNACK

Early childhood is a prime time for introducing and teaching healthy food habits. A snack time is scheduled for mid-morning each day. If your child has dietary restrictions due to medical or religious reasons, please notify the teacher.

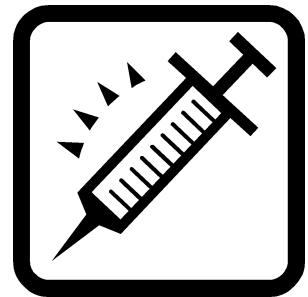
ACCIDENT & ILLNESS NOTIFICATION

In the event of a significant student accident or illness during the school day, the school nurse will contact the parents/guardians as soon as possible. When completing annual online registration, parents are asked to provide emergency contact information for individuals who would care for their child in the event of illness, accident or injury, when they, the parent/guardian, cannot be reached. **Parents must keep this emergency contact information up to date and notify the school office immediately of any changes.** In the event of a serious emergency, it is our policy, unless specifically requested to do otherwise, to contact parents immediately, and, if necessary, activate emergency medical services.

IMMUNIZATIONS

According to NH RSA 141-c:20-a, students must have proof of all New Hampshire required immunizations, documentation of immunity, or valid exemptions, in order to be admitted or enrolled in any school in the Mascoma Valley Regional School District. Medical and Religious exemptions have specific requirements, please contact the school nurse for exemption information. Documentation of immunization **MUST** be provided before a child's first day of school attendance. Children may be conditionally enrolled when the parent/guardian provides:

1. Documentation of at least one dose of each required vaccine; AND
2. The appointment date for the next dose of required vaccine.



MEDICATION

In accordance with the *MVRSD Policy JLCD*, medication required during the school day is to be administered by the school nurse, principal, or other designee. Medication will be administered in school only after receiving and filing in the student's health record the following:

1. A written statement from the licensed prescriber detailing the method of taking the medication, dosage, and the time schedule of the medication.
2. A written authorization from the parent/guardian indicating the desire that the school assist the student in taking the prescribed medication.

All medication should be delivered to appropriate school personnel by the parent/guardian. All prescription medication must be delivered and contained in its original pharmacy container. The school nurse is directed to keep such medications in a locked cabinet and refrigerator. No more than a 30-day supply will be kept and maintained by the school. The school nurse will contact the parent/guardian regarding any unused medication. Such medication shall be picked up by parent/guardian within ten days after its use is discontinued. If the parent/guardian does not pick up the medication within ten days, the school nurse may dispose of the unused medication and record as such in the student's health record.

Students shall not share any prescription or over-the-counter medication with another student. Students acting in violation of this prohibition will be subject to discipline consistent with applicable Board policies.

This policy shall extend to any school-sponsored activity, event, or program.



EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL FOR ILLNESS

In accordance with *MVRSD Policy JLCG*, a student of the Mascoma Valley Regional School District may be excluded from the classroom when he/she exhibits symptoms of a contagious or communicable illness. **The school nurse is responsible for determining whether a student should be excluded from school for such an illness.** Parents will be notified if their child is excluded from school for such an illness and provided with criteria for readmission.

When your child is in school, we expect that he/she will participate in all school activities, including recess and physical education. Students will not be kept indoors for recess or excluded from physical education due to minor illnesses. Only under special circumstances and with the advice of a doctor in writing will a child be kept indoors at recess or be excluded from physical education.

STUDENT DRESS

Please label all clothing. This avoids confusion and lost articles. Please send in only what your child can handle on his/her own. Teacher's hands need to be available for children at transition and dismissal times. In choosing appropriate footwear, please take your child's abilities into consideration, as safety and independence are high priorities.

In keeping with *MVRSD Policy JICA*, reviewed and adopted in 2023, students:

- are *not* to wear "clothing depicting hate speech, offensive, vulgar, or racist language or pictures"
- are *not* to wear "clothing that glorifies or promotes use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco"
- are *not* to wear clothing that exposes their midsection
- are *not* to wear hats or caps in the classroom

Any student in violation of the dress code will be required to find clothing that meets the code or will be sent home to correct the situation.

Winter Clothing

Please note that children are scheduled to be outside for recess unless the temperature and/or wind chill factor is at or below 10°F.

In winter months, students must come to school with:

- a coat
- snow pants
- boots
- gloves or mittens
- a hat or headband



Students will not be permitted to play in the snow or on the snow banks, without the above mentioned articles of clothing. Children who are missing any of the articles of clothing mentioned above will be restricted to the plowed blacktop. A separate pair of indoor footwear is also recommended in winter months.

LOST AND FOUND

It is wise to place a permanent label on all items brought to school. Labeling avoids potential confusion and lost items that are labeled are easily returned to their owner. Unidentified articles of clothing and other items left in public areas of the school will be placed on the lost and found table and photographs of the items will be on the school website. Please note that unclaimed items do accrue as the year goes on and storage space in the building is limited. Before each school vacation that is a week or more in duration (Holiday, Winter, Spring, Summer), all items in the Lost and Found will be packed up and donated to a local charity, such as the *Listen Center*.

LIBRARY BOOKS

Students often visit the Canaan library with their class. They are permitted to borrow two books at a time and are permitted to bring these books home. Students and families assume responsibility for these books while they are in their care. A lost or damaged library book must be found or replaced at the family's expense before that student will be permitted to check out a second book again. The student may continue to check out one library book at a time in the interim, unless a second book is lost or damaged before restitution is made on the first.

PLACEMENT

Great care is taken to create classroom communities focusing on classroom size, skill level, learning style, special education needs, gifted and talented needs, and student-to-student interaction to make sure that all student needs are met. The placement team consists of the principal, specialists, special education staff, and present and future grade level teachers. **Parent requests for specific teachers should not be made.** If you have specific placement concerns and feel that you need to speak with the principal, please call to set up a time.

PRESCHOOL

Who Can Attend?

The preschool program is open to children who are three (on or before September 30th). Three-year-olds meet two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday), from 8-11:30 a.m. or 11:45-3:00 p.m. The preschool program is also open to children who are four (on or before September 30th). Four-year-olds meet three days a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), from 8-11:30 a.m. or 11:45-3:00 p.m. The program is an inclusive, integrated classroom, serving a maximum of 12 four year olds and 10 three year olds in each session.

Drop off and Pick Up

For our morning sessions, families are asked to drop off their children between 8:00 and 8:10 a.m. at the front of the school. Preschool children are not permitted to be dropped off prior to 8:00 a.m. Pick up at the end of the morning session takes place promptly at 11:30 a.m. in front of the school.

For our afternoon sessions, families are asked to drop their children in front of the school at 11:30 a.m. Pick up at the end of the day takes place promptly at 3:00 p.m. in front of the school.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please call (603) 523-4312 before 8:30 a.m. **Absences do not alter a child's tuition bill.** The space is held for your child regardless of his/her participation and expenses are not reduced. If you know in advance that your child will not be in attendance, it is greatly appreciated if a written note is sent.

Clothing

Children should leave a full set of clothing at school (shirt, pants, underwear, and socks).

Tuition

All tuition inquiries should be directed to the administrative assistant at CES. Tuition payments are due on the first school day of the month. Parents will be notified if payment has not been received by the 8th of the month. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, you will be contacted by the school. Payments that are more than one month late may result in your child being withdrawn from the program. The \$30 registration fee must be paid at the time of registration.

Federal and state laws require school districts to identify and provide programs for all children with special needs starting at age three. If you think you have a child with special needs that is three or four years of age, please contact District Special Education Coordinator for Preschool, Lisa Nevins at 603 523-4312 ext 4130 or lnevins@mvrds.org.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Our school has an active PTA. The true “Canaan Spirit” shines through in this organization. Along with providing volunteer support, the group raises money that is spent on the students of the school in many ways. It conducts a variety of activities to enhance the education of our children and provides topical information to parents. Fundraisers support various school projects and provide a service to the community. These special projects also create an opportunity for the adults in our community to get to know one another and socialize.

Our PTA is a “working” organization. Due to hectic daily schedules, we know that many individuals can’t attend monthly meetings. However, our experience has shown that many of those same people have a tremendous amount to offer in terms of skills and willingness to work on specific projects throughout the year. That’s the strength of our organization! Please consider giving your time/talent to one or more of our projects. Specific program planning is available at the start of each school year.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES



The school board recognizes that citizens, students, community members and organizations may wish to express support for a particular program or activity by conducting fundraising activities. Fundraising drives involving school children require the prior approval of the school principal and school board.

VOLUNTEERING

Adults from the community are invited to become school volunteers to assist teachers and students with special class projects, to chaperone field trips, to help with holiday parties, etc. There is an application process and criminal background check in order to become a volunteer for the Mascoma schools. Instructions can be found online at https://www.mascomaschools.org/career/volunteer_information. Volunteer Application packets can also be picked up in the front office. A deadline for volunteer applications will be established each year and will always be prior to the district's April Vacation.

VISITING

Visitors should contact the teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time to visit the classroom. Prolonged visits (strictly observational) are discouraged as they may affect the routine classroom operation. In addition, younger siblings should not accompany parents during a classroom visit. Any visitor must report to the school office on the day of a classroom visit to sign in and obtain a *Visitors Badge*. The visitor's badge is to be worn where it can be seen throughout the visit. Any visitor should make his/her visit as unobtrusive as possible, allowing classroom activities to continue without interruption. Visitors are to sign out at the front office at the end of their visit and return their visitors badge.

CALENDAR

MASCOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2023 - 2024 School Calendar (Approved 2-14-23/Revised 3-17-23)

	M	Tu	W	Th	F		M	Tu	W	Th	F
August	NT	T	T	T	X	February				1	2
3	X	29	30	31		16	5	6	7	8	9
							12	13	14	15	16
							X	X	X	X	X
							26	27	28	29	
September					X	March					1
19	X	5	6	7	8	20	4	5	6	7	8
	11	12	13	14	15		11	12	13	14	15
	18	19	20	21	22		18	19	20	21	22
	25	26	27/ED	28	29		25	26	27	28/ED	X/T
October	2	3	4	5	6	April	1	2	3	4	5
21	X	10	11	12	13	17	X	X	X	X	X
	16	17	18	19	20		15	16	17/EDC	18	19
	23	24	25/ED	26	27		22	23	24	25	26
	30	31					29	30			
November			1	2	3	May			1	2	3
18	6	7	8	9	X	22	6	7	8	9	10
	13	14	15/EDC	16	17		13	14	15/ED	16	17
	20	21	X	X	X		20	21	22	23	24
	27	28	29	30			X	28	29	30	31
December					1	June	3	4	5	6	7
15	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	S/T/G
	11	12	13	14	15		S/T	S/T	X/S/T	S/T	S/T
	18	19	20	21	X		S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T	S/T
	X	X	X	X	X						
January											
20	X	X	3	4	5						
	8	9	10	11	12						
	X	16	17	18	19						
	22	23	24/ED	25	26						
	29	30	31								

August 21st	New Teacher Orientation	
August 22nd-24th	Teacher Work Days	G = Graduation: June 14, 2024 TENTATIVE DATE (depending on the number of snow days)
August 24th	9th Grade Orientation	
August 29th	First Day of School	
September 1st- 4th	No School/Labor Day	ED = Early Dismissal
October 9th	No School/Columbus Day	EDC = Early Dismissal/Parent Conferences (Elementary)
November 10th	No School/Veteran's Day	X = No School
November 22nd - 24th	No School/Thanksgiving	T = Teacher Work Days (No School)
December 22nd - January 2nd	Holiday Vacation	NT = New Teacher Orientation
January 15th	No School/MLK Day	S = Possible Weather Day Make-Up
February 19th - February 23rd	Winter Vacation	First Quarter Ends: Thursday, November 2nd (45 days)
April 8th - April 12th	Spring Vacation	Second Quarter Ends: Tuesday, January 23rd (45 Days)
May 27th	No School/Memorial Day	Third Quarter Ends: Wednesday, April 3rd (45 Days)
June 13th	Last Day of School (if no snow days)	Year Ends: June 13th (if no snow days) (45 days)
June 19th	No School/Juneteenth	
June 28th	Last Teacher Day (with 10 snow days)	

APPENDIX - SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

List of Policies Included:

AC – Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity Employment and District Anti-Discrimination Plan (4/28/20)
AC-E – Annual Notice of Contact Information for Human Rights Officer, Title IX Coordinator, **504** Coordinator and Civil Rights Agencies (4/28/20)
ACAC – Title IX Sexual Harassment (9/22/20)
ACAC-R – Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (9/22/20)

See the school website for the following policies:

ADC/GBED/JICG – Prohibitions Regarding Use and Possession of Tobacco Products, E-Cigarettes and E-Liquids in and on School Facilities and Grounds (11/24/20)
ECAF – Audio and Video Surveillance on School Buses (11/10/20)
EF - Food Service Management (1/22/19)
EFA – Availability and Distribution of Healthy Foods (11/1/18)
EFAA – Meal Charging (8/27/19)
GBEBB – Employee-Student Relations (2/11/20)
GBEC – Drug-Free Workplace & Drug-Free Schools (2/26/19)
IGDJ - Interscholastic and Intramural Sports (2/16/17)
IKE – Promotion and Retention of Students (2/9/21)
JH - Attendance, Absenteeism and Truancy (12/4/18)
JH-R2 - MVRSD Attendance Contract (11/15/18)
JI – Student Rights and Responsibilities (4/27/21)
JIC – Student Conduct (4/27/21)
JICA – Student Dress Code (3/21/23)
JICC – Student Conduct on School Buses (2/22/22)
JICC-R – School Bus Conduct Rules (12/12/22)
JICD – Student Discipline & Due Process (4/27/21)
JICD-R – Safe School Zones Memorandum of Understanding (4/27/21)
JICDD – Student Discipline/Out of School Actions (11/10/20)
JICFA – Hazing (2/9/21)
JICH – Drug and Alcohol Use by Students (5/28/19)
JICI - Weapons on School Property (5/12/15)
JICJ – Acceptable Use of Electronic Devices in School (10/23/18)
JICK - Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention – Bullying (11/10/20)
JLCF - Wellness (2/28/23)
JLCJ - Concussions and Head Injuries (1/26/21)
JLDBB – Suicide Prevention and Response (11/22/22)
JLDBB-R – Suicide Prevention Procedures (9/8/20)
JLF – Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect (10/27/20)
JRA – Student Records & Access - FERPA (11/10/20)

AC – NON-DISCRIMINATION, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT and DISTRICT ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PLAN

Category: Priority/Required by Law

Related Policies: ACE, GBAA, JBAA, JICK, KED

Prohibition Against Discrimination of Students in Educational Programs and Activities.

Under New Hampshire law and Mascoma Valley Regional School Board policy, no person shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in the District's public schools because of their age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, marital status, familial status, disability, religion or national origin. Discrimination, including harassment, against any student in the District's education programs, on the basis of any of the above classes, or a student's creed, is prohibited. Finally, there shall be no denial to any person of the benefits of educational programs or activities, on the basis of any of the above classes, or economic status. Harassment of students other than on the basis of any of the classes or categories listed above is prohibited under Board policy JICK Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention.

Equal Opportunity of Employment and Prohibition Against Discrimination in Employment.

The Mascoma Valley Regional School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The District ensures equal employment opportunities without regard to age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. The District will employ individuals who meet the physical and mental requirements, and who have the education, training, and experience established as necessary for the performance of the job as specified in the pertinent job description(s).

Discrimination against and harassment of school employees because of age, sex, race, creed, religion, color, marital status, familial status, physical or mental disability, genetic information, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, or gender identity are prohibited. Additionally, the District will not discriminate against any employee who is a victim of domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, or stalking.

Policy Application.

This Policy is applicable to all persons employed or served by the District. It applies to all sites and activities the District supervises, controls, or where it has jurisdiction under the law, including where it (a) occurs on, or is delivered to, school property or a school-sponsored activity or event on or off school property; or (b) occurs off of school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity or event, if the conduct interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of the school or school-sponsored activity or event, as set forth in Board policy JICK, Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention. Examples of sites and activities include all District buildings and grounds, school buses and other vehicles, field trips, and athletic competitions.

District Anti-Discrimination Plan.

No later than October 15, 2020, the Superintendent shall develop and provide to the Board for approval, a coordinated written District Anti-Discrimination Plan (the "Plan") to include guidelines, protocols and procedures intended to prevent, assess the presence of, intervene in, and respond to incidents of discrimination. Among other things, the Plan should include provisions, and recommendations with respect to resources, policies, complaint procedures, student education programs, Plan dissemination and training appropriate to carrying out the Plan objectives stated in the preceding paragraph.

In developing the Plan, the Superintendent is encouraged to seek input from appropriate groups of the school and local community and coordinate with the District's Human Rights [Non-Discrimination] Officer and Title IX and 504 Coordinators.

No less than once every two years (off years from review of the District's Suicide Prevention Plan per Policy JLDBB, the Superintendent shall update the District Anti-Discrimination Plan, and present the

same to the Board for review. Such Plan updates should be submitted to the Board in time for appropriate budget consideration.

Human Rights [or Non-Discrimination], Title IX, 504 and other Coordinators or Officers.

The Superintendent shall assure that District and or building personnel are assigned to the positions listed below. Each year, the Superintendent shall prepare and disseminate as an Appendix AC-E to this Policy an updated list of the person or persons acting in those positions, along with their District contact information, including telephone number, email, postal and physical addresses.

Human Rights [or Non-Discrimination] Officer
Title IX Coordinator
504 Coordinator

The Appendix will also include current contact for relevant state and federal agencies including:

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Civil Rights
N.H. Human Rights Commission
N.H. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Unit
N.H. Department of Education, Commissioner of Education

Complaint and Reporting Procedures.

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of this policy by any student, employee, or other person under the supervision and control of the school system, or any third person who knows or suspects conduct that may constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying, should contact the District Human Rights Officer, or otherwise as provided in the policies referenced below under this same heading.

Any employee who has witnessed, or who has reliable information that another person may have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of this policy has a duty to report such conduct to his/her immediate supervisor, the District Human Rights Officer, or as provided in one of the policies or administrative procedures referenced below under this same heading. Additionally, employees who observe an incident of harassment or bullying are expected to intervene to stop the conduct in situations in which they have supervisory control over the perpetrator and it is safe to do so. If an employee knows of an incident involving discrimination, harassment, or bullying and the employee fails to report the conduct or take proper action or knowingly provides false information in regard to the incident, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

Investigations and resolution of any complaints shall be according to the policies listed below and related administrative procedures or regulations. Complaints or reports regarding matters not covered in one or the other of those policies should be made to the District Human Rights Officer.

- Reports or complaints of sexual harassment or sexual violence by employees or third party contractors should be made under Board policy GBAA;
- Reports or complaints of sexual harassment or sexual violence by students should be made under Board policy JBAA;
- Reports or complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability should be made under Board policy ACE, except for complaints regarding facilities accessibility by disabled non-students or employees, which should be made under Board policy KED; and
- Reports or complaints of bullying or other harassment of pupils should be made under Board policy JICK.

Alternative Complaint Procedures and Legal Remedies.

At any time, whether or not an individual files a complaint or report under this Policy, an individual may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights (“OCR”), of the United States Department of Education, or with the New Hampshire Commissioner for Human Rights.

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921; Telephone number: (617) 289-0111; Fax number: (617) 289-0150; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Note: Complaints to OCR must be filed in writing no later than 180 days after the alleged act(s) of discrimination. OCR may waive its 180 day time limit based on OCR policies and procedures.

New Hampshire Commission for Human Rights, 2 Industrial Park Drive, Concord, NH 03301; Telephone number: (603) 271-2767; Email: humanrights@nh.gov

Notwithstanding any other remedy, any person may contact the police or pursue a criminal prosecution under state or federal criminal law.

Retaliation Prohibited.

No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the Board or by any District employee against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy, unless that person knew the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.

Administrative Procedures and Regulations.

The Superintendent shall develop such other procedures and regulations as are necessary and appropriate to implement this Policy.

Notice of Compliance.

The Superintendent will provide notice of compliance with federal and state civil rights laws to all applicants for employment, employees, students, parents, and other interested persons, as appropriate.

Draft to School Board: 12/16/03

First Reading: 12/16/03; Second Reading and Adoption: 1/13/04

SB Review: 11/27/18; F&F Review: 4/3/19; 1st Reading: 4/23/19; 2nd Reading: 5/14/19

Policy Review: 1/30/20; 1st Reading: 2/25/20; 2nd Reading/Adopted: 4/28/20

AC-E - ANNUAL NOTICE OF CONTACT INFORMATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER, TITLE IX COORDINATOR, 504 COORDINATOR AND CIVIL RIGHTS AGENCIES

Pursuant to Board Policy AC, *Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity Employment, and District Anti-Discrimination Plan*, the District administration is directed to update and publish a list of current personnel and contact information for various positions and outside agencies relating to the District’s anti-discrimination policies.

DISTRICT PERSONNEL:

Human Rights [or Non-Discrimination]:

Name: Diane Adam

Address: 27 Royal Road, Canaan, NH 03741

Telephone: 603-632-4308

Email Address: dadam@mvrds.org

Title IX Coordinator:

Name: Diane Adam
Address: 27 Royal Road, Canaan, NH 03741
Telephone: 603-632-4308
Email Address: dadam@mvrds.org

504 Coordinator:

Name: Chris Beeso, Special Education Director
Address: 547 US Route 4/PO Box 789, Enfield, NH 03748
Telephone: 603-632-5563
Email Address: cbeeso@mvrds.org

OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education; 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921; Telephone - 617-289-0111; Email - OCR.Boston@ed.gov
Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Dept of Agriculture; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410; Telephone - 866-632-9992; Email – program.intake@usda.gov
N.H. Commission for Human Rights, 2 Industrial Park Drive, Concord 0330, Telephone - 603-271-2767; Email – humanrights@nh.gov
N.H. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Unit; 33 Capitol Street, Concord, NH 03301; Telephone – 603-271-1181
N.H. Department of Education, Commissioner of Education; 101 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301, Telephone – 603-271-3494; Email - info@doe.nh.gov

Policy Review (New Policy): 1/30/20; 1st Reading: 2/25/20; 2nd Reading/Adopted: 4/28/20

ACAC - TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Category: Priority/Required by Law

The definition of “Sexual Harassment” is found in Section II.B of this Policy. Instructions for making a report or complaint of sexual harassment are found in Section II.J.1. The “Title IX Grievance Process” and the procedure for filing a formal complaint to initiate the grievance process can be found in the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (ACAC-R).

RESTATEMENT OF POLICY PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX.

Per the Mascoma Valley Regional School Board Policy AC, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (“Title IX”), as well as RSA 193:38, among others, the Mascoma Valley Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities, including employment and admissions. All forms of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment are prohibited in the District.

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY.

Application of This Policy.

While all forms of sex-based discrimination are prohibited in the district, the purpose of this policy is to address, and only to address, sexual harassment as defined in Title IX and Sec. II.B, below, that occurs within the educational programs and activities of the district, and to provide a grievance process for investigating and reaching a final determination of responsibility for a formal complaint of sexual harassment. The “Title IX Grievance Process” is set out in the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (ACAC-R). While the District must respond to all “reports” it receives of sexual harassment, the Title IX Grievance Process is initiated only with the filing of a formal complaint.

The purpose of this Policy, however, is to address, and only to address, sexual harassment as defined in Title IX that occurs within the educational programs and activities of the district. For harassing conduct which does not meet the definition of sexual

harassment under Title IX and this Policy, the District's response will be governed under other applicable laws and policies per Board policy AC, and policies referenced therein.

This Policy shall apply to all students, employees, and any third party who contracts with the District to provide services to District students or employees, upon District property or during any school program or activity.

Nothing in this policy will be construed to confer on any third party a right to due process or other proceedings to which student and employee respondents are entitled under this policy unless such right exists under law. Volunteers and visitors who engage in sexual harassment will be directed to leave school property and/or be reported to law enforcement, the NH Division of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), as appropriate. A third party under the supervision and control of the school system will be subject to termination of contracts/agreements, restricted from access to school property, and/or subject to other consequences, as appropriate.

The Superintendent shall have overall responsibility for implementing this Policy, and shall annually appoint a District Title IX Coordinator as that position is described in Section II.C, below. The name and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator is set forth in Board Policy AC-E, which policy shall be updated and disseminated annually with the Title IX Coordinator's name as set forth in Board policy AC.

Definitions.

As used in this Policy and the Title IX Grievance Process, the terms below shall have the meaning ascribed.

"Actual knowledge" occurs when the District's Title IX Coordinator or **ANY** employee of one of the District's schools (other than a "respondent" or alleged harasser) receives a notice, report or information or becomes aware of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment.

"Complainant" is an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, whether or not that person files a report or formal complaint.

"Days" shall mean calendar days, but shall exclude non-weekend days on which the SAU office is closed (e.g., holidays, office-wide vacations), or any weekday during the school year on which school is closed (e.g., snow days).

"Decision Maker" means persons tasked with: the responsibility of making initial determinations of responsibility (at times referred to as "initial decision maker"); or the responsibility to decide any appeal (at times "appeals decision maker") with respect to formal complaints of sexual harassment in accordance with the Title IX Grievance Process.

"Determination of Responsibility" is the formal finding by the decision-maker on each allegation of Sexual Harassment contained in a Formal Complaint that the Respondent did or did not engage in conduct constituting Sexual Harassment Under Title IX.

"Formal Complaint" means a document filed by a complainant, the complainant's parent/guardian, or the Title IX Coordinator, alleging sexual harassment against a respondent, and requesting that the district investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

"Respondent" is an individual who is reported to be the individual accused of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment" prohibited under Title IX and by this policy *is conduct on the basis of sex* (including, without limitation, gender, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity), occurring in a school system education program or activity that satisfies one or more of the following:

A school district employee conditioning an aid, benefit, or service of an education program or activity on an individual's participation or refusal to participate in sexual conduct irrespective of whether the conduct is welcomed by the student or other employee;

Unwelcome sex-based/related conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, **AND** objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the education program or activity (this standard requires consideration of all the facts and circumstances, including, but not limited to, the ages and disability statuses of the harasser and victim and the number of individuals involved and their authority); **OR** Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in state or federal law.

Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

Sexually suggestive remarks or jokes;
Verbal harassment or abuse;
Displaying or distributing sexually suggestive pictures, in whatever form (e.g., drawings, photographs, videos, irrespective of format);
Sexually suggestive gesturing, including touching oneself in a sexually suggestive manner in front of others;

35

Harassing or sexually suggestive or offensive messages that are written or electronic;
Subtle or direct propositions for sexual favors or activities;
Touching of a sexual nature or groping; and
Teasing or name-calling related to sexual characteristics or the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles or conduct.

Note: incidents of the above conduct would still need to satisfy one or more of the criteria in paragraphs 1-3 of this definition.

Sexual harassment may be directed against a particular person or persons, or a group, whether of the opposite sex or the same sex.

The context of behavior can make a difference between conduct falling within the technical definition of Sexual Harassment Under Title IX, and conduct of a sexual nature that is offensive or hostile in itself, but which does not arise to the level within that definition. **District policies prohibit both, but for purposes of its Title IX obligations the District must address reports or complaints of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment as defined above, under this specific, limited scope Policy and Title IX Grievance Process.** Except as used in other laws (e.g., Title VII) or policies (e.g., Board policy JICK) pertaining to harassment, including of a sexual nature, other than Title IX sexual harassment, all references to “sexual harassment” in this policy mean sexual harassment that meets the above definition.

Conduct that satisfies this definition is not sexual harassment for purposes of this policy if the conduct occurred (1) outside the United States or (2) under circumstances in which the school system did not have substantial control over both the harasser/respondent and the context in which the harassment occurred.

NOTE Regarding Concurrent Enrollment and Dual Enrollment, Extended Learning Opportunities, 3rd Party Distance Learning and Other Alternative Instructional Programs: Under federal regulations, in order for the District to have jurisdiction over conduct that would otherwise meet the definition above of sexual harassment, the District must have substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurred. In general, this will mean that unless such learning program is occurring upon district property, conduct otherwise meeting the definition of sexual harassment within that program, may not be subject to this policy.

“**Supportive Measures**” are free, non-disciplinary, non-punitive, individualized services and shall be offered to the complainant, and may be offered to the respondent, as appropriate. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Counseling;
- Course modifications;
- Schedule changes; and
- Increased monitoring or supervision

Such measures shall be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District’s education programs and activities without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District’s educational environment and/or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures shall remain confidential with exclusive exceptions stated required in Sec. II.E, below.

Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator shall respond promptly to all general reports as well as formal complaints of sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator shall receive general and specific reports of sexual harassment, and coordinate the District’s responses to both reports and formal complaints of sexual harassment so that the same are prompt and equitable. In addition to any other specific responsibilities assigned under this Policy, or as assigned by the Superintendent, the Title IX Coordinator will be responsible for:

- meeting with a complainant, and informing the parent/guardian once the Title IX Coordinator becomes aware of allegations of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment as defined in this Policy;
- identification and implementation of supportive measures;
- signing or receiving formal complaints of sexual harassment;
- engaging with the parents/guardians of parties to any formal complaint of sexual harassment;
- coordinating with District and school-level personnel to facilitate and assure implementation of investigations, and remedies, and helping to assure that the District otherwise meets its obligations associated with reports and complaints of sexual harassment;
- coordinating with the Superintendent with respect to assignment of persons to fulfill the District’s obligations, both general and case specific, relative to this Policy (e.g., investigator, decision makers, etc.; this may involve the retention of third party personnel.);
- coordinating with District and school-level personnel to assure appropriate training and professional development of employees and others in accordance with Sec. II.D of this Policy; and
- helping to assure that appropriate systems are identified and maintained to centralize sexual harassment records and data.

In cases where the Title IX Coordinator is unavailable, including unavailability due to a conflict of interest or other disqualifying reason (see Sec. II.G, below), the Superintendent shall assure that another person with the appropriate training and qualifications is appointed as acting Title IX Coordinator for that case, in such instances “Title IX Coordinator” shall include the acting Title IX Coordinators.

Training.

All District employees shall receive regular training relative to mandatory reporting obligations, and an other responsibilities they may have relative to this Policy. Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, this Policy, the scope of the District's education program or activity, and how to conduct an investigation (including the requirements of the reporting and the Title IX Grievance Process, including hearings, appeals, and information resolution processes). The training must also include avoiding prejudgment of the facts, conflicts of interest and bias.

Decision-makers must also receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.

Investigators must receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence. Materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes, must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment, and must be made available to the public as provided in Sec. II.H of this Policy.

Confidentiality.

The District will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the respondent as much as possible, however, some information may need to be disclosed to appropriate individuals or authorities. All disclosures shall be consistent with the District's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of harassment and take disciplinary action. Examples of required disclosure include:

- information to either party to the extent necessary to provide the parties due process during the Title IX Grievance Process;
- information to individuals who are responsible for handling the District's investigation and determination of responsibility to the extent necessary to complete the District's grievance process;
- mandatory reports of child abuse or neglect to DCYF or local law enforcement (per Board policy JLF);
- information to the complainant's and the respondent's parent/guardian as required under this Policy and or the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"); and
- reports to the New Hampshire Department of Education as required under N.H. Code of Administrative Rules Ed 510 regarding violations of the NH Code of Conduct for Education Professionals.

Additionally, any supportive measures offered to the complainant or the respondent shall remain confidential to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the school district to provide the supportive measures. Except as specified above, the District shall keep confidential the identity of:

- Any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination;
- Any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment;
- Any complainant;
- Any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination;
- Any respondent; and
- Any witness.

Any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent shall be kept confidential to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality does not impair the ability of the District to provide the supportive measures.

Retaliation Prohibited.

Retaliation against any person who makes a report or complaint, or against any person who assists, participates, or refuses to participate in any investigation of an act alleged in this Policy is prohibited. Actions taken in response to **materially** false statements made in bad faith, or to submitting **materially** false information in bad faith, as part of a report or during the Title IX Grievance Process do not constitute retaliation. A finding of responsibility alone is insufficient to conclude that a person made a materially false statement in bad faith. Complaints of retaliation with respect to reports or formal complaints of sexual harassment shall be filed under the District's general grievance process.

Conflict of Interest.

No person designated as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, nor any person designated by the District to facilitate an informal resolution process, may have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

Dissemination and Notice.

The District shall include in all student and employee handbooks, and shall make publicly available on the district's website the following information:

- The District's policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sex (included in Board policy AC),
- the title, name, office address, email address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator (to be provided pursuant to Board policy AC and its addendum, updated annually, ACE);

the complaint process;
how to file a complaint of sex discrimination or sexual harassment;
how the District will respond to such a complaint; and
a statement that Title IX inquiries may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

The same information shall be provided to all persons seeking employment with the District, or seeking to enroll or participate in the District's educational programs or activities. Additionally, the District will make this Policy, as well as any materials used to train personnel as required under Sec. II.D publicly available on the district's website.

Records and Record Keeping.

For each report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, the District, through the Title IX Coordinator, must create, and maintain for seven (7) years, record of:

Any actions, including any supportive measures,
The basis for the District's conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent; and
Documentation which:

If supportive measures were provided to the complainant, a description of the supportive measures taken designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity; or
If no supportive measures were provided to a complainant, explains the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

In addition, the District shall maintain the following records for a minimum of seven (7) years:

Records for each formal complaint of sexual harassment, including:

Any determination regarding responsibility, including dismissals;
Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent;
Any remedies provided to the complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity;
Any appeal and the result therefrom;
Any informal resolution process and the result therefrom;

All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers.

Reports of Sexual Harassment, Formal Complaints and District Responses.

Report of Sexual Harassment.

NOTE: *A report does not initiate the formal Title IX Grievance Process. That process is begun only upon the filing of a formal complaint under the procedures set out in II.J.3 below and Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (ACAC-R).*

Any person may report sexual harassment whether relating to her/himself or another person. **However, if any District employee – other than the employee harasser, or the Title IX Coordinator – receives information of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment under this Policy, s/he shall, without delay, inform the Title IX Coordinator** of the alleged sexual harassment. Failure to report will subject the employee to discipline up to and including dismissal. A report of sexual harassment may be made at any time, in person, by mail, by telephone, electronic mail, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Additionally, while the District strongly encourages reports of sexual harassment to be made directly to the Title IX Coordinator, the report may be made to **any** District staff member, including, for instance, a counselor, teacher or principal.

If the Title IX Coordinator is the alleged respondent, the report or formal complaint may be made directly to the Superintendent, who shall thereafter fulfill the functions of the Title IX Coordinator regarding that report/complaint, or delegate the function to another person.

NOTE: For any allegation of sexual assault on a student under the age of 18, such conduct shall be reported immediately to the DCYF per Board policy JLF. If the alleged respondent (perpetrator) is a person holding a license or credential from the New Hampshire Department of Education (i.e., "credential holder"), then a report shall also be made pursuant to Board policy GBEAB.

District Response to Report of Sexual Harassment.

The district will promptly respond when there is actual knowledge of sexual harassment, even if a formal complaint has not been filed. The district shall treat complainants and respondents equitably by providing supportive measures to the complainant and by following the Title IX Grievance Process prior to imposing any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures.

As soon as reasonably possible after receiving a report of alleged sexual harassment from another District employee or after receiving a report directly through any means, the Title IX Coordinator shall contact the complainant to:

discuss the availability of and offer supportive measures;
consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint; and
explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints.

Pursuant to federal regulations, and this Policy, a formal complaint that contains an allegation of sexual harassment and a request that the District investigate the allegations is required before the District may conduct a formal investigation of sexual harassment or take any action (other than supportive measures) against a person accused of sexual harassment. **Once a formal complaint of sexual harassment is received by the Title IX Coordinator, s/he shall commence the Title IX Grievance Process set out in Sec. I.A. in the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (ACAC-R). The process for filing a formal complaint is set forth in Sec. I.A. in the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (ACAC-R).**

Limitation on Disciplinary Action.

In no case shall the District impose disciplinary consequences or sanctions against a respondent who has been accused of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment, until the Title IX Grievance Process has been completed.

Emergency Removal and Administrative Leave.

At any point after receiving a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator (or other District official charged with a specific function under this Policy or the Title IX Process: e.g., investigator, decision maker, etc.) may request the Superintendent to direct that an individualized safety and risk analysis be performed to determine whether a respondent student is an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any person. In the event that the safety and risk analysis determines that the respondent student does present an immediate threat to the physical health and safety of any person, the District may remove that student, provided that such removal is in full compliance with the IDEA, a student's IEP and or 504 plan if applicable. Such emergency removal shall not be disciplinary. However, the District must provide the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal, and shall continue to offer educational programming until a final determination is made pursuant to the Title IX Grievance Process.

The Title IX Coordinator shall keep the Superintendent of Schools informed of any employee respondents so that he/she can make any necessary reports to New Hampshire Department of Education in compliance with applicable administrative rules and the New Hampshire Code of Conduct for Educational Professionals. In appropriate cases, the Superintendent may place an employee respondent on non-disciplinary administrative leave pursuant to RSA 189:31.

Legal References:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C 1681, et seq 20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

34 CFR. Part 99, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations

34 CFR 106.8, Designation of responsible employee and adoption of grievance procedures.

34 CFR 106.30, Definitions

34 CFR 106.44, Recipient's response to sexual harassment

34 CFR 106.4, Grievance process for formal complaints of sexual harassment

34 CFR 106.71, Retaliation

RSA 193:38, Discrimination in Public Schools

NH Dept of Ed. Rules Ed 303.01 (i), School Board Substantive Duties

Ed 303.01(j), Substantive Duties of School Boards; Sexual Harassment Policy

Legal References Disclaimer: *These references are not intended to be considered part of this policy, nor should they be taken as a comprehensive statement of the legal basis for the Board to enact this policy, nor as a complete recitation of related legal authority. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.*

See Also: ACAC-R Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures, AC, AC-E

New Policy/1st Reading/Adopted: 9/22/20

ACAC-R - TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

TITLE IX GRIEVANCE PROCESS.

The Title IX Grievance Process is used only upon the filing of a formal complaint of sexual harassment as described in Sec. I.A, below. The provisions of Section I of the Policy are incorporated as part of the Title IX Grievance Process. Upon receipt of a

formal complaint of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will coordinate the District's efforts to comply with its responsibilities related to the Title IX Grievance Process.

Process for Filing a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment.

The Title IX Grievance Process is initiated by way of a formal complaint ("complaint" or "formal complaint") filed by the complainant, the complainant's parent/guardian, or the Title IX Coordinator. The complainant may file a complaint or choose not to file a complaint and simply receive the supportive measures. If the Complainant does not file a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator may sign a formal complaint, but only if initiating the grievance process against the respondent is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances, and in other cases where, in the exercise of good judgment and in consultation with the District's attorney as appropriate, the Title IX Coordinator determines that a grievance process is necessary to comply with the obligation not to be deliberately indifferent to known allegations of sexual harassment (e.g., reports of sexual assault, employee on student harassment, repeat reports, or the conduct in the complainant's report has not been adequately resolved through the provision of supportive measures). If the complaint is filed by the Title IX Coordinator, he/she is not a party to the action, and the District must comply with all of the provisions of the Title IX Grievance Process relative to respondents and complainants.

If no formal complaint is filed by the complainant or the Title IX Coordinator no disciplinary action may be taken against the respondent based upon conduct that would constitute sexual harassment under this policy.

Although there is no time limit per se to filing a formal complaint, for complaints initiated by the complainant or his/her parent/guardian, the complainant must be employed by the District or participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activities of the District at the time of filing. Additionally, although the District will initiate the Title IX Grievance Process regardless of when the formal complaint is submitted, delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of school officials to investigate and respond to the allegations.

At a minimum, a formal complaint must:

- contain the name and address of the complainant and the student's parent or guardian if the complainant is a minor student;
- describe the alleged sexual harassment,
- request an investigation of the matter, and
- be signed by the complainant or otherwise indicate that the complainant is the person filing the complaint.

The complaint may be filed with the Title IX coordinator in person, by mail, or by email. Complaint forms may be obtained from the Title IX Coordinator or on the district website (School Board Policy ACAC-F).

Initial Steps and Notice of Formal Complaint.

The Title IX Coordinator will provide notice to the complainant and the complainant's parent/guardian (if the complainant is a non-eligible student under FERPA), and to the respondent (if known) and the respondent's parent/guardian (if the respondent is a non-eligible student under FERPA), as well as to any other known parties, of the following:

- this Title IX Grievance Process, including any informal resolution process;
- the allegations of sexual harassment potentially constituting sexual harassment, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview; "sufficient details" shall include to the extent known identities of persons involved, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the incident;
- a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- that each party may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney;
- that each party is entitled to inspect and review evidence; and
- a reference to any provision in the District's code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

The Title IX Coordinator will contact the complainant to discuss and offer supportive measures.

The Title IX Coordinator may contact the respondent to discuss, and or impose, non-disciplinary supportive measures.

The Title IX Coordinator will examine the allegations in the formal complaint, to determine whether even if assumed true, the allegations are sufficient to sustain a finding of sexual harassment under this Policy. If the Title IX Coordinator was not involved with preparing the formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and whether amendment is appropriate, in which case the process of Sec. I.C.4 will apply.

If the formal complaint fails to satisfy the definition of sexual harassment in this Policy, the complaint shall be dismissed as provided in Sec. I.G, below.

If the complaint is not dismissed, then Title IX Coordinator will consult with the Superintendent as to whether the Title IX Coordinator should act as the investigator or whether a different District or other employee shall act in that capacity. At the same time, the Title IX Coordinator and the Superintendent shall appoint the person who shall make the initial determination of responsibility (initial decision maker). Ordinarily the building principal shall serve as the initial decision maker. In all cases, the investigator and the initial decision maker must be properly trained and otherwise qualified (see Sec. II.D "Training", and Section II.G "Conflict of Interest").

If the report alleges sexual harassment by the Superintendent, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the School Board Chair and the Business Administrator, the latter of whom shall have authority to seek guidance from the District's general counsel, but shall not delay the District's response to the report as outlined in this Policy.

General Provisions and Additional Definitions Relative to Title IX Grievance Process.

Copies and Notices. Except as specifically stated elsewhere in this Policy, for any document, information or material required to be delivered to a party or to a person assigned with responsibility under the Title IX Grievance Process, the manner of transmittal may be by electronic mail, regular mail or such other manner reasonably calculated to assure prompt delivery with evidence thereof (such as a commercial carrier or other receipted delivery). Hand delivery will only be permitted if made to the District official charged with the specific function under this Policy (e.g., Title IX Coordinator, Superintendent, investigator, decision maker(s), etc.). Any document required to be delivered to a minor or other non-eligible student, must also be delivered to the minor's parent/guardian. Copies should also be sent to a party's advisor if the information for the advisor has been previously communicated to the sending party. (Under federal regulations, copies of the investigative evidence, as well as the investigative report, must be forwarded to a party's advisor. See Sections I.E.3, and I.E.4).

Risk Analysis and Emergency Removal. At any point during the Title IX Grievance Process, the Title IX Coordinator may arrange for an individualized safety and risk analysis as described in Sec. II.J.5, following which a student may be removed.

Administrative Leave. At any point during the Title IX Grievance Process, the Superintendent, and at his/her own discretion, and with or without consulting the Title IX Coordinator, may place an employee on administrative leave pursuant to RSA 189:31.

Additional Allegations. If, in the course of an investigation, the District decides to investigate allegations about the complainant or respondent that were not included in the previous notice, the District shall simultaneously provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

No Interference with Legal Privileges. At no point in process will the Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, any decision maker, or any other person participating on behalf of the District, require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitutes, or seeks disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege (e.g., doctor/patient, attorney/client, clergy, etc.), unless the person holding such privilege (parent/guardian for minor student) has waived the privilege in writing to use the information with respect to the Title IX Grievance Process.

Consolidation of Complaints. The District may consolidate formal complaints of allegations of sexual harassment where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances and the formal complaints are against more than one respondent; or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents; or by one party against the other party. When the District has consolidated formal complaints so that the grievance process involves more than one complainant or more than one respondent, references to the singular "party", "complainant", or "respondent" include the plural, as applicable.

Remedies: Range of Disciplinary Sanctions and Remedial Actions Upon Final Determination of Responsibility

"Disciplinary sanctions" are consequences imposed on a respondent when s/he is found responsible for sexual harassment under this Policy. Remedial actions are actions intended to restore or preserve a complainant's equal access to the educational programs and activities of the District.

"Disciplinary sanctions" against an employee respondent may include any available sanction available for the discipline of employees, up to and including dismissal or non-renewal for any other violation of Board policy, NH Code of Conduct for Educational Professionals, applicable individual or collective bargaining contract, or state or federal laws or regulations.

"Disciplinary sanctions" against a student may include any available discipline or sanction, up to and including expulsion, under the policies, rules and procedures that establish the district's comprehensive student code of conduct.

"Remedial actions" as to a respondent after a final finding of responsibility, whether employee or student, may include the imposition upon a responsible respondent of any additional non-disciplinary measures appropriate to effecting a remedy for sexual harassment, and may include such measures as no-contact requirements, scheduling adjustments, removal or exclusion from extracurricular activities, class reassignments, limits on future class registrations, restrictions on access to various spaces in the school buildings, reassignment of attendance, and similar measures fine-tuned to respond appropriately to the circumstances surrounding a successful complainant's right to access the district's program and activity.

Additional remedial actions may include recommendations that a school-wide or system-wide response is needed in order to respond to the sexual harassment in a way that is not clearly unreasonable under the circumstances. In such cases, the Superintendent shall provide additional staff training, harassment prevention programs, or such other measures as determined appropriate to protect the safety of the educational environment and/or to deter sexual harassment.

Timeframe of Grievance Process.

The District shall make a good faith effort to conduct a fair, impartial grievance process in a timely manner designed to provide all parties with a prompt and equitable resolution. It is expected that in most cases, the grievance process will be concluded through at least the determination of responsibility decision within 80 days after filing the formal complaint. In more complex cases, the time necessary to complete a fair and thorough investigation or other circumstances mean that determination of responsibility cannot reasonably be made within that timeframe.

Summary of Grievance Process Timeline.

- Investigation 20 +/- days as the complexity of the case demands (Sec. I.E.1) below
- 10 days for reviewing information prior to conclusion of investigation
- 10 days after receiving report to respond to report
- 10 days for decision maker to allow initial questions
- 10 days for responses to questions
- 10 days for questions and responses to follow-up questions.
- 10 days for determination of responsibility decision
- 10 days for appeal (6 additional days for administrative steps)
- 10 days for argument/statement challenging or supporting determination
- 10 days for decision on appeal

Delays and Extensions of Time. At any stage of the grievance process, the District (through the Superintendent, or if the Superintendent is the respondent, the Title IX Coordinator or designee) may for good cause allow for temporary delays or extensions of time upon request of either party, or on his/her own initiative. Examples of good cause may include such things as availability of parties or witnesses, school or school administrative office holidays or vacations, referral back to an earlier stage of the grievance process, concurrent law enforcement or other agency activity, or need to obtain interpreters or accommodation of disabilities. For any such delay or extension of time, the Superintendent or the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice to the parties of the delay/extension and the reason(s).

Investigation.

The Title IX Coordinator will coordinate the investigation. The investigator shall be as appointed pursuant to Sec. I.B.5, above.

The Title IX Coordinator may conduct the investigation, or, in consultation with the Superintendent, designate another qualified person to investigate. The investigation and investigator must:

- Include objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, including inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. (Evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior is offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the evidence concerns specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and is offered to prove consent.)
- Ensure that the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on the District and not on either of the parties;
- Provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence;
- Not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence;
- Provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any interview or other part of the investigation, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice. The investigator may restrict any others from participating, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties;
- Provide, to a party (e.g., respondent or complainant – and parent/guardian as appropriate) whose participation is invited or expected, written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all hearings, investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate within the timeframes established in Sec. I.D, above.
- Provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint;

Prior to completion of the investigative report, the District, through the Title IX Coordinator, must send to each party and party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties must have at least 10 days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report;

The investigator must prepare a written investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, including, without limitation, witness credibility, discrepancies, inculpatory and exculpatory information, and relevant District policies, rules and regulations, and the manner in which the same were made known to the pertinent school populations or specific parties. The investigative report shall include a description of the procedural steps taken, starting with the receipt of the formal complaint, and continuing through the preparation of the investigative report, including any notifications to the parties, interview with parties and witnesses, site visit, and methods used to gather evidence.

The investigator shall provide the investigative report in hard copy or electronic format to the Title IX Coordinator, to each party and each party's advisor, if any. Each party will have 10 days from receipt to provide the Title IX Coordinator a written response to the investigative report.

It serves all parties when investigations proceed diligently and conclude within a reasonable time, which may vary case by case. In most cases, it is expected that the investigator will conclude the initial investigation, and provide the parties the evidence and other information required under Sec. I.E.2, above. Not more frequently than every other week, any party may request the Title IX Coordinator to obtain and provide the parties with a basic status report on the investigator's progress toward completion. In most cases, the investigator should conclude the investigation within 10-20 days after receiving a Formal Complaint.

Determination of Responsibility and Initial Decision Maker.

The determination of responsibility of the respondent shall be made by the initial decision maker as appointed pursuant to Section III.B.5.

Prior to making a determination of responsibility, the initial decision maker will afford each party 10 days to submit written, relevant questions to the initial decision maker that the party wants asked of any party or witness. The initial decision-maker must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the question and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainants prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The initial decision maker will provide the questions to the party/witness, with copies to each party, and provide no less than 10 days for written responses, likewise to be provided to each party.

The initial decision maker will provide 5 days each for supplementary, limited follow-up questions and 5 days for answers, and may provide for additional rounds of follow-up questions, as long as the provision is extended to both parties equally.

The initial decision maker may not make any credibility determinations based on the person's status as a complainant, respondent or witness.

The respondent must be deemed to be not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

The initial decision maker may impose disciplinary sanctions and remedies as described in Section I.C7, above.

The standard to be used for formal complaints in determining whether a violation has occurred and/or that the respondent is responsible is the preponderance of the evidence standard, which is only met when the party with the burden convinces the fact finder (the initial decision maker) that there is a greater than 50% chance that the claim is true (i.e., more likely than not).

The initial decision-maker must issue a written determination/decision within 10 days after the close of the period for responses to the last round of follow-up questions. The written "Initial Determination of Responsibility" must include:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the Initial Determination of Responsibility, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather evidence, and hearings held;
- Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusions regarding the application of the District's applicable codes of conduct, policies, administrative regulations or rules to the facts;
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility (i.e., whether or not the respondent is responsible for sexual harassment), and any disciplinary sanctions or remedies; and
- The District's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal (as set forth in Section I.H, below).

The decision maker shall provide the Initial Determination of Responsibility to the Title IX Coordinator, the Superintendent and the parties simultaneously.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint.

The District must dismiss a formal complaint with regard to Title IX sexual harassment if the alleged conduct:

- Would not constitute sexual harassment, even if proved;
- Did not occur in the District's education program or activity; or
- Did not occur against a person in the United States.

The District may dismiss a formal complaint with regard to Title IX sexual harassment if at any time during the investigation or determination of responsibility stage(s):

A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the District; or
Specific circumstances prevent the recipient from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Prior to dismissal of a complaint, the person responsible at that stage shall consult with the Superintendent.
Upon dismissal of a formal complaint, the District must promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) therefor simultaneously to the parties.

The dismissal of a formal complaint under Title IX does not preclude the District from continuing any investigation or taking action under other District policies, code of conduct or administrative rules/regulations. In some cases, the District may have an obligation to continue an investigation and proceed under a different policy or mandated process.

Appeals Process.

Either party may appeal the Initial Determination of Responsibility or the dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegation in a formal complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing (“written appeal”), with a copy to the Title IX Coordinator. If there are multiple determinations of responsibility, the written appeal shall specify which ones are included in the appeal. The written appeal must be received by the Superintendent within 10 days of the Initial Determination of Responsibility or written notice of dismissal being communicated to the parties.

An appeal under this Policy may only be based upon one or more of the following bases, which must be stated specifically in the party’s written appeal:

Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; or
The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

Appeals for any other reason or upon any determination of responsibility not included in the written appeal will not be heard.

Appeals pertain only to the determination of responsibility and non-disciplinary remedies. Once a determination of responsibility is final per Sec. I.I, below, appeals of disciplinary sanctions may be made pursuant to the District’s ordinary review process for discipline, or, to the extent applicable, any statutory or other processes provided under collective bargaining agreements or individual contracts.

Within 3 days of receipt of the written appeal, the Superintendent shall appoint a decision maker for appeal (“appeals decision maker”), who must have adequate training as provided in Section II.D, be free from conflict of interest as provided in Section II.G, and may not be the same person as the initial decision maker, the person who ordered dismissal, the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator. Upon the appointment of the appeals decision maker, the Superintendent shall provide a Notice of Appeal to each party and to the Title IX Coordinator, with a copy of the written appeal. The Notice of Appeal must include information about all deadlines and timeframes in the appeal stage.

Each party shall have 10 days from the date the Notice of Appeal is delivered to the parties to submit to the appeals decision maker a written statement, with copies to the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, and other party a statement (“appeal statement”) in support of, or challenging, the determination of responsibility or dismissal.

Each party shall provide copies of the appeal statement to the other party, the Superintendent, and the Title IX Coordinator at the same time the appeal statement is given to the appeals decision maker. If the basis of the appeal is newly available evidence affecting the outcome, the party shall submit such evidence or a summary of such evidence along with the party’s appeal statement.

The appeals decision maker may refer an appealed issue back to a prior point in the grievance process, with written notice to the parties, the Superintendent and the Title IX Coordinator.

The appeals decision maker shall provide a written appeals decision after considering the record and the parties’ appeal statements. The appeals decision maker will only overturn the Initial Determination of Responsibility upon a conclusion that it was clearly erroneous (i.e., either made on unreasonable grounds, or without any proper consideration of the circumstances). If the basis or one of the bases for the appeal was new evidence, the appeals decision maker may either make a determination of responsibility regarding that evidence, or refer it back to the appropriate stage of the Title IX Grievance Process. The written appeals decision will describe the result(s) of the appeal and the rationale, with copies provided to the parties, Superintendent and Title IX Coordinator, no more than 10 days after receiving the last of the parties’ written statements per Section I.H.5, above.

Finality of Determination of Responsibility. The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that the recipient, through the Superintendent, provides the parties with the written determination of the result of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which an appeal of the Initial Determination of Responsibility would no longer be considered timely. The final determination shall be identified as the Title IX Decision.

Once the Title IX Decision is final, the District may implement remedies and disciplinary sanctions. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any non-disciplinary remedies, with the assistance of building and District administrative personnel, while disciplinary sanctions will be imposed by persons charged with such responsibilities under other Board policies, regulations or administrative procedures. The District may also proceed against the respondent or complainant pursuant to the District's applicable code of conduct or other Board policies, collective bargaining agreement, individual contract or administrative rules/regulations/procedures. The issue of responsibility for the conduct at issue shall not be subject to further review or appeal within the District.

Informal Resolution.

At any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility (but only after the filing of a formal complaint), the District may offer an optional informal resolution process (e.g., mediation, arbitration), provided that the District:

Provides written notice to the parties disclosing:

The allegations of the formal complaint;
The requirements of the information resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations, provided, however, that at any time prior to agreeing to an informal final resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint; and
Any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.

Obtains the parties' voluntary written consent to the informal resolution process; and

In no event may the District offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

See Also: ACAC – Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy

Note: The remaining policies listed in the Appendix are located on the school website