

Lothrop School

lothrop.rnesu.org



Student-Parent Handbook

2016-2017

Be Safe ~ Be Responsible ~ Be Respectful

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Lothrop School

3447 US Rt 7* Pittsford, Vermont* (802)-483-2242* (Fax (802)-483-2146

Be Safe * Be Responsible * Be Respectful

Dear Lothrop School Community:

The Lothrop staff welcomes you to the Lothrop School Community. Our goal is to provide each child with a successful educational experience, and we need your cooperation and support in order to accomplish this.

This handbook is designed to provide you with an overview of the Lothrop School Community. Space does not allow us to include all policies and procedures, so we encourage you to call if you have questions that are not addressed in this handbook or on our website.

Communication between parents/guardians and the school are central to a child's success within our school community. Our school staff is always available to provide support and guidance for the children we serve. Our centralized phone system will provide you with direct access to your child's classroom teacher day or night. We encourage you to call and leave a voicemail message if you need to communicate with the staff. E-mail communication is strongly encouraged.

Each year new programs and events are created for the Lothrop School Community. We publish a weekly newsletter as a means of updating you throughout the school year. The community can also keep in touch through social media. We are always looking for parent volunteers to work within the school community. A sincere desire to help children and a willingness to become a part of the team are the only requirements. If you are interested, please call us and we can explore possibilities.

We hope that this handbook will be a valuable reference when questions come up throughout the school year. Please feel free to call and ask for any other information at any time. We look forward to an exciting, engaging and interactive school year for everyone.

Students First!

Debbie Alexander
Principal, Lothrop School

**PHONE NUMBERS AND EXTENSIONS
2016-2017**

12	Adams, Michele		20	Robinson, Bonnie
26	Alberico, Susan		20	Rose, Bill
31	Alexander, Debbie		21	Sanderson, Jody
28	Allaire, Audrey		36	Schmitz, Dan (Maker Lab)
29	Blanchard, Tammi		13	Sherman, Stephanie
12	Bonanza, Deb		48	Tribou, Susan
41	Chapman, Rachel			Common Space
27	Clark, Linda		43	Blue House
39	Corey, Beth		44	Cafeteria
12	Crossmon, Bill		15	Conference Room
23	Desforges, Mary		16	Kitchen (to reach kitchen staff)
33	Duggan, Kevin		22	Multi-Purpose Behind Staff Lounge
10	Eaton, Steve (Facilities Office Down Below Office)		19	Multi-Purpose 5/6 Hall
11	Eddy, Sara		37	Multi-Purpose Book Room 3/4 Hall
30	Erickson, Mallory		30	Multi-Purpose Former Kinder Classroom
17	Gee, Lynn		34	Staff Room
40	Houston, Todd			RNESU Schools and Offices
20	Ingram, Kathy		773-3763	Barstow School
16	Kitchen		483-2062	Caverly
483-2062	Ladago, Sharon-Caverly		247-2769	Congdon, Becky (Transportation) 770-9982
20	Lash, Nicolette		247/8825	Leicester School
14	Mader, Carolyn		483-2972	Maclure Library
20	Morse, Susan		247/3721	Neshobe School
18	O'Neil, Stanley-Head Custodian		247-6833	Otter Valley
35	Parker, Melanie		483-6500	Pittsford Town Office
32	Pauls, Jed (Former Conference Room)		247-5757	RNESU
25	Pinson, Jane		623-7771	Sudbury School
38	Quenneville, Alicia		623-7991	Whiting School
24	Quenneville, Pat			

HISTORY

The Lothrop School was built in 1911 on land given by Henry F. Lothrop. Eleven years later the Town Hall was built on the school grounds to serve the dual purpose of town meeting space and student gymnasium. In 1961, four additional rooms were added to the original eight in the main building. That same year Pittsford students in grades 7-12 began attending the newly opened Otter Valley Union High School and Lothrop became a grade K-6 school. Another addition in 1985 added four more classrooms and a library which made it possible for the kindergarten classes to move from the Caverly property to Lothrop. In June, 2013, Lothrop School celebrated 100 years with a town-wide celebration and party that will long be remembered.

We are proud of our beautifully maintained buildings and have been fortunate to have the Burditt Fund to underwrite many of the improvements over the years. The most recent improvements provided handicap accessibility to the Town Hall as well as throughout the 1911 building and a redesigned entryway to increase student safety.

The Pittsford community has always been very supportive of our students. We strive to provide an atmosphere which encourages our students to give back to the community just as so many others have done in the past.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union is dedicated to the development of character, competence, creativity, and community. We value the following: Caring, Effort and Resilience, Visual and Performing Arts, Social and Personal Responsibility, Acceptance and Celebration of Diversity, Mutual Respect, Individual and Collective Achievement, Appreciation of the Natural World, Physical Health and Wellness, Lifelong Learning, and Equity.

The Lothrop School provides all children with a quality education:

- A. By the development of a teaching staff that facilitates pupil learning by their own example of enthusiasm, energy and active participation in classroom activities.
- B. By providing a nurturing environment where each child feels secure and worthwhile.
- C. By setting expectations, planning for instruction, selecting materials, and evaluating growth based on the emotional, social, intellectual, creative and physical nature of the child.
- D. By providing a feeling of success that encourages children to strive for further progress and future successes.
- E. By preparing pupils to become self-directed learners capable of adapting to an ever-changing society.
- F. By helping children to develop an awareness of, and an appreciation for, other cultures and the natural world.
- G. By working to establish positive home/school communications.
- H. By identifying individual needs for each student and providing supports to help each student grow.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Be Safe ~ Be Responsible ~ Be Respectful

ATTENDANCE

The school day begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 2:45 PM. There is supervision on the playground starting at 7:40 AM, and students may come into the classrooms starting at 7:55 AM. Please be aware that critical instruction begins at 8:00 AM. If your child is tardy he or she is starting the day off by missing academic instruction. Please make sure your child arrives by 7:55 AM.

Parents are expected to call the school to report all absences before 8:00 AM. Chronic absences are considered truancy. If a student is absent for two or more days in a row without an adult contacting the school, we may send a representative of the school and/or the Pittsford Police Officer to the home to do a well child check. If a student is absent 5 or more days, excused or unexcused, the family will be contacted by the school and a meeting may be required. A letter will be sent home after 7 absences, excused or unexcused and after 10 total absences. If a student continues to be absent after the ten days, the school may make a referral to The Vermont Department of Children and Families. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to provide a written excuse for each day a child is not in school.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to schedule necessary medical and dental appointments, etc., for after school hours or on vacations. Parents are encouraged to schedule their vacations to coincide with school vacations. The Lothrop School Community encourages students to attend school on a regular basis since students only gain full advantage of education when they are in the classrooms. We hope that parents will take vacations during school vacations and we discourage vacations that would have students miss school for prolonged periods of time. We also recognize that there may be circumstances when this cannot be avoided. When this occurs, please send a letter ahead of time to the classroom teacher so that he or she can plan accordingly. Teachers may choose to send work with the family, or they may put work aside while the child is away and then the child will need to complete the work upon his or her return. If a student falls behind in schoolwork because of this type of absence, parents may need to consider hiring a tutor to provide extra help so that the student can catch up. Questions regarding school attendance procedures should be directed to the Principal.

BIKE RIDING AND BICYCLE SAFETY

Students are welcome to ride bicycles to and from school. However, they must obey the following rules:

1. Bikes must be safe and well maintained and helmets **MUST** be worn.
2. Students must walk their bikes when crossing the road at a crosswalk.
3. Bikes are to be "walked" and parked as soon as the student arrives on school property. A rack is provided for this purpose.
4. The school is not responsible for any student's bicycle while parked on school property.
5. Students must enter and exit school property safely, or they will lose their right to ride.

ONE CALL NOW

Families are asked to provide the school with emergency contact information (phone numbers and/or email addresses) for use with our One Call Now. The system allows us to make one phone call which goes out to all of our students' families and the school staff in the event of school closings/delays, early dismissal, school evacuation, etc. Please be sure to keep your emergency contact information up to date throughout the school year. You can update the information by contacting Sara Eddy, School Secretary at Ext. 11

CLOSINGS/DELAYS

School may be closed in the event of bad weather. The district has developed a plan for school cancellations in case of inclement weather. There will be two options that will be considered: either "no school" or a "two-hour delay." During a two-hour delay, parents should be alert to changing conditions. If conditions worsen, the decision to close school will be made by 6:30 a.m. so parents should stay tuned to the radio, television and/or anticipate a call through the One Call Now .

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

The Early Childhood Program is part of the Lothrop School. We provide a yearly screening called "Child Information Day" which is held in early June for children ages three and four. Programs are provided for children through the Caverly Preschool located off Plains Road behind the Town Offices. We offer 10 hours per week for three and four year old students. We also provide programs for children ages 0 - 5 with developmental delays. These services include developmental testing, home visits, speech and language therapy, occupational and physical therapy referrals and collaborative programs with area childcare providers.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

1. The One Call Now will be used to notify parents/guardians.
2. Listen to local radio and/or television stations.
3. The Lothrop Facebook Page and other social media accounts will be updated as soon as we are in a safe place.
4. School staff will call emergency numbers provided by the parents on InfoSnap. Contact Sara Eddy at Ext. 11 if you need to update your emergency numbers.
5. All-school evacuation drills are conducted on an annual basis.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The school requires parent/guardian current addresses, work and home phone numbers and persons to contact in an emergency if parents cannot be reached. A physician and dentist must be designated. Contact Sara Eddy at Ext. 11 if you need to make changes during the school year.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Drama

Lothrop Elementary School traditionally presents a drama production most years for grades four through six. We begin by exploring what the playwright is telling us. Theater language is taught. Students are introduced to drama activities designed to free their creativity and develop technical skills on stage. Pantomime, voice exercises and improvisations are stressed. If acting is a craft, a skill and an art, talent can be developed and proficiency acquired. Students are trained that “acting is believing” and challenged to operate in an imaginary world.

Sports

Lothrop students participate in sports programs coordinated by the Pittsford Recreation Department. The school and recreation department work closely in this endeavor.

Lothrop’s Youth Sports Philosophy:

It is our belief that at the elementary level (through grade 6) youth sports programs should emphasize: participation, skill development, sportsmanship, teamwork and fun. Every child deserves an opportunity to learn, improve and experience success as evidenced by their improved self-esteem and confidence. Competition between individuals or other teams should not be the sole or primary focus. As children are introduced to game situations, the emphasis should be placed on the achievement of individual and group goals as opposed to “winning at all costs”. It is the responsibility of the adults involved in these programs to ensure that children find sports participation to be a positive experience and to set good behavior and sportsmanship examples for children. It is our hope that children will find enjoyment through participation in sports and will continue to make physical activity a part of their lives.

In keeping with this philosophy, we endorse the following “Bill of Rights for Young Athletes:”

Bill of Rights for Young Athletes:

1. Right to the opportunity to participate in sports regardless of ability level.
2. Right to participate at a level that is commensurate with each child’s developmental level.
3. Right to have qualified adult leadership.
4. Right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
5. Right of each child to share in the leadership and decision-making of their sport participation.
6. Right to play as a child and not as an adult.
7. Right to proper preparation for participation in the sport.
8. Right to an equal opportunity to strive for success.
9. Right to be treated with dignity by all involved.
10. Right to have fun through sports.

Bill of Rights for Young Athletes (from Thomas, J.R. (ed.) 1977. Youth Sports Guide for Coaches and Parents, Washington, D.C.; National Association for Sports and Physical Education.)

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

One way that the school provides information to parents is through our weekly newsletter. Information can also be found on the school’s website: lothrop.rnesu.org. School contact information, a calendar of events, PTO minutes, School Board minutes and cafeteria menus are just some of the types of information available to you on the website.

At the beginning of this handbook is a list of staff extension numbers. Voicemail messages can be left at any time, day or night.

LOST AND FOUND

Throughout the school year we have many “lost” articles of clothing, lunch boxes and jewelry. These items are kept in the cafeteria. Parents are welcome to check this area at any time. If items are not claimed they will be donated to local charitable organizations at the end of each month so we do not have a large accumulation of lost items.

Parents, please put your child’s name on all clothing, lunch boxes, etc. This way the articles will be more easily returned to your child.

MEDIA OPT OUT

Families have the right to request that their students’ picture not be used by Lothrop and/or other media outlets. If you would like a media opt out form, please contact the front office to request one.

PARENT INPUT ENCOURAGED

Parents with questions and concerns about the school, or the progress of their child, are encouraged to discuss them with appropriate school personnel. In the interest of satisfactory problem solving, the school believes issues should first be discussed with whoever is closest to the situation. In the case of the classroom, that will almost always be the teacher.

In the event that an issue arises which cannot be resolved to the parent’s satisfaction by the principal, the parent or guardian is encouraged to discuss the situation with the Superintendent of Schools. Only after these remedies have been tried would a concern merit the attention of the Board of School Directors.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

According to its by-laws, the Lothrop Parent Teachers Organization exists to:

1. Promote between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantage in physical, mental and spiritual growth and character development.
2. Bring into closer relation the home and school which the parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.

The PTO seeks to achieve these goals by contributing support to classroom projects, school activities, equipment, and by sponsoring events which bring together Lothrop students, staff and members of the Pittsford community. In addition, the PTO offers an opportunity for teachers and administrators to share information with parents and receive feedback about school activities. Fundraisers are held at various times throughout the year to support these efforts. The PTO has a board of elected officers as well as a teacher representative from the staff. Meetings are held monthly to organize events, discuss staff requests and update members on school issues. All are welcome to attend these meetings. Please call the school for the time and location. The PTO will remain a vital force at Lothrop with the continued support and involvement of parents, the school staff and community.

PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES

The recess time provides an excellent opportunity to practice many of the social skills we discuss daily in the classroom. It is also the place where students have an opportunity to make decisions and act on them without the direct input from adults.

Some of the decisions made by students at recess do not follow our school rules; Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful. When this happens, those supervising the playground need to take quick and decisive action in order to protect all students. In most cases, this means the student will be asked to take a break or will be sent to the Student Support Center or principal.

We believe that this immediate feedback will help us make our recess time a learning experience in taking care of others, the environment and ourselves.

POLICIES

Policy Manual

We are required to maintain a District Policy manual, which contains policies adopted by the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union as well as our own Lothrop Board. These policies and procedures are extensive and include all aspects covering students, staff, governance, and facilities.

They include such specific issues such as: School Board Meetings, Notification of Availability of Asbestos Management Plans, Smoking in the Workplace, Preventing and Responding to Unlawful Harassment of Students, Sexual Harassment, Drug Free Workplace, Act 51 Statement, Students with Disabilities, Child Find Statement, Notice of Non-Discrimination, Notice of Rights Concerning Student Records, and Notice of Directory Information and Right of Refusal, Preventing and Responding to Unlawful Harassment of Employees & Third Parties. The policy manual is available to anyone who wishes to review it. A copy of a policy may be requested through the school office. Policies can also be found on the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union website (www.rnesu.org) under the policy section located on the side bar.

Bullying Prevention Plan

Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union
School (s): All

Policy Code: JG

POLICY ON THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING OF STUDENTS

I. Purpose

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and member Districts recognize that all students should have a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. Bullying is a form of dangerous and disrespectful behavior that will not be permitted or tolerated. Bullying may involve a range of misconduct that, based on the severity, will warrant corrective action and/or discipline. Behaviors that do not rise to the level of bullying may still be subject to intervention and/or discipline under another section of the discipline plan or policy.

II. Definition of Bullying

For the purposes of this policy, “bullying” is defined as any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- a. is repeated over time;
- b. is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- c. either:
 - occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity; or
 - does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s right to access educational programs.

Examples of bullying include:

- Name-calling and verbal taunts
- Physical threats or actual physical harm
- Off-campus text messages or social media posts that ridicule or intimidate to the extent that the targeted student is not able to fully access the school’s programs

In order to be bullying, incidents such as the ones described above must be repeated over time, directed at a particular student, and intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate.

In some cases, acts of bullying may constitute unlawful harassment, where the conduct is based on or motivated by a student’s or student’s family member’s actual or perceived:

Race	Sexual Orientation
Creed	Gender Identity
Color	Marital Status
National Origin	Disability
Sex	

Any allegations of harassment will be addressed under the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Policy on the Prevention of Harassment of Students.

III. Reporting Bullying Complaints

The principal of each school will annually designate two employees to receive complaints of bullying and harassment. These people are Tim Rand, and Melanie Parker.

For the purposes of this policy, “school employee” means any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District/-Supervisory Union, an agent of the school, a school board member/member of the board of trustees, a student teacher, an intern, or a school volunteer. “Agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

- A. Student Reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been bullied under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying, is encouraged to report the conduct to a designated employee or to any other school employee.
- B. School Employee Reporting: Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and shall immediately report it to a designated employee. Any school employee who directly receives information about conduct that might constitute bullying will immediately report it to a designated employee.
- C. Parent Reporting: Any parent or legal guardian/custodian who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying or who reasonably believes his/her child or ward is being bullied should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any school employee.
- D. Documentation of the Report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall reduce the complaint to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses.
- E. False Complaint: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of bullying when the person has a good faith belief that bullying occurred or is occurring.
- F. Confidentiality and Record Keeping: The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the Districts' obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.

IV. Response to a Bullying Complaint

For the purposes of this policy "school administrator" means a superintendent, principal, or his/her designee.

- A. Notification: Upon receipt of a complaint of bullying the designated employee will immediately notify the school administrator of the complaint. If either the complainant or the accused individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be promptly notified that a complaint of bullying has been filed and be provided with a copy of this policy.
- B. Investigation: Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families ("DCF") or the police, school vacations, or other witness absence/unavailability, the school administrator shall:
 - a. No later than **one school day** after the filing of the complaint with a designated employee initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein

shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator.

- b. No later than **five school days** from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, the investigator shall submit a written determination to the school administrator. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes bullying.

C. Consequences for Violations of This Policy

- a. If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes bullying, the school shall take remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the bullying, prevent any recurrence and may take appropriate disciplinary action. Examples of remedial action include: mediation between the parties, education and counseling for the bully, and safety planning.
- b. Violators of the bullying policy shall - based on relevant surrounding facts and circumstances, including but not limited to a consideration of prior instances of similar behavior and the student's overall disciplinary history - be subject to the following potential discipline and/or remedial action(s):
 - i. Awareness/Education/Counseling;
 - ii. Acts of restitution;
 - iii. In-school suspension;
 - iv. Out of school suspension; or,
 - v. Expulsion.
- c. Safety Planning
 - i. A safety plan shall be developed in all instances where a student has been the target of bullying that results in physical harm and/or the student is known to be expressing suicidal ideation as a result of bullying. A safety plan shall not be considered a substitute for in-school procedures and policies that apply to students experiencing mental health crises.
 - ii. A safety plan should be considered in instances where the targeted student is known to have difficulty accessing the educational programs at the school as a result of bullying.
 - iii. A safety plan may include such measures as checking in with the target and his/her parents on a regular basis, identifying a safe in-school person for the target to seek out when s/he feels threatened, informing teachers to pay particular attention to interactions/ dynamics between identified students and rearranging the schedule of the perpetrator, and providing additional supervision in areas ordinarily subject to lesser supervision (e.g., lunchroom, playground).

D. Parental Notification: Upon completion of the investigation, the school administrator will notify the parent(s) or guardian of the complainant and accused individual(s) of the outcome of the investigation. In cases where the school determines that bullying has occurred, a school administrator may seek a waiver of the confidentiality rights of the perpetrator(s) in order to inform the complainant of any specific disciplinary action taken.

E. Appeal of Discipline Decisions: A person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it may appeal the determination and/or the

disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with the District's disciplinary policy or applicable statutes.

V. Reporting to Other Agencies

- A. **Reports to Department of Children and Families:** When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901 et seq.
- B. **Reports to Law Enforcement:** Information obtained and documented by school administration regarding the school's response to notice of student conduct that may constitute bullying may constitute an "educational record" regarding the student or student(s) involved as defined by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, such information may not be disclosed to local law enforcement without prior parent approval except in response to a lawfully issued subpoena, or in connection with an emergency if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
 - a. Nothing in this policy shall preclude persons from reporting incidents and/or conduct witnessed first-hand that may be considered to be a criminal act to law enforcement officials. Such conduct includes but is not limited to: physical attacks resulting in bodily harm, assault, and simple assault.
- C. **Continuing Policy to Investigate:** Reports made to either DCF or law enforcement shall not be considered to absolve the school administrators of their obligations under this policy to pursue and complete an investigation upon receipt of notice of conduct which may constitute bullying.

VI. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting

- A. **Notice to Parents and Employees:** Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the School District shall provide notice to custodial parents or guardians, staff members, and contracted employees of its prohibition against bullying, the procedures concerning reporting and investigating bullying and the possible disciplinary consequences for bullying.
- B. **Notice to Students:** The superintendent shall develop and initiate age-appropriate programs to annually inform students about the substance of the policy and procedures in order to help prevent bullying. Notice to students shall be in age appropriate language and will include examples of bullying. Such notice shall inform students and parents that bullying that *does not* occur during the school day, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event still may be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §§ 11(a) (32) and 1162(a)(3), if the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

Notice to parents and students shall state that any student who knowingly makes false accusations regarding bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

- C. Training: The superintendent shall implement training for school staff regarding this policy and to enable staff to prevent, recognize, and respond to bullying.
- D. Date Reporting: Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union delegates the responsibility of data collection to the building principal. S/he shall collect data on the number of reported incidents of bullying and the number of incidents that have been verified and shall make such data available to the Vermont Department of Education.

Legal References: 16 V.S.A. § 11(a)(32)
 16 V.S.A. § 570(a)
 16 V.S.A. § 570c(4)
 16 V.S.A. § 570c(5)
 16 V.S.A. § 1162(a)(3)
 33 V.S.A. § 4911
 33 V.S.A. § 6901

Policy Cross References: IIBG: Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources & The Internet
 JBEAA: Prevention of Harassment of Students
 JFC: Student Conduct and Discipline

Preventing and Responding to Unlawful Harassment of Students

Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union
 School(s): All

Policy Code: JBEAA

**PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO
 UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS**

I. Purposes

Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and its member districts are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. This policy addresses students¹ who are subjected to incident(s) and/or conduct that occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, or incident(s) and/or conduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, but where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with a student’s equal access to educational programs.

Unlawful Harassment is a form of discrimination that will not be tolerated. It is the policy of the districts within RNEU to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. Consistent with these purposes, annually,² each school shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their availability in any publication

¹ Grievances regarding employees and/or third parties being subjected to harassment should follow the procedures outlined in **Policy GBEAA**.

² See 16 V.S.A. § 565(c)(1).

of the districts within RNESU that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.

It is the intent of the districts within RNESU to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that is likely to substantially disrupt the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources, or create a hostile learning environment.

The districts within RNESU shall promptly and effectively address all complaints of unlawful harassment and promptly end harassing conduct according to procedures established by policy, and shall take appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop unlawful harassment, found against any person, subject to the jurisdiction of the districts within RNESU who violates this policy, prevent its recurrence and remedy the impact of harassment on the victim(s). Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline. Such serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a person for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.

II. Definitions

1. **School Community** includes, but is not limited to, all students, parents, school employees, contractors, unpaid volunteers, work study students, interns, student teachers, and visitors.
2. **Employee** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the districts within RNESU, an agent of the school, a school board member/member of the board of trustees, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, "agent of the school" includes supervisory union staff.
3. **Third Parties** means any individuals who are not students of the school district or employees of the supervisory union.
4. **Complaint** means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.
5. **Complainant** means an individual who has filed an oral or written complaint with a school employee on behalf of a student, or a student who is the target of alleged harassment in a report made by another person.
6. **Designated employee** means an employee who has been designated by the school or supervisory union to serve as the non-discrimination coordinator to receive complaints of unlawful harassment pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. § 565(c)(1). Designated non-discrimination coordinators are identified within corresponding procedures that are included in annual notifications.
7. **Notice** means oral information or a written complaint that unlawful harassment may have

occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the unlawful harassment, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. In addition, notice may occur when an employee of the district, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment. A district can receive notice of potential unlawful harassment in many different ways. A student (or his/her parent/guardian) may have filed a written or oral grievance with designated employee or complained to a teacher or other employee about unlawful harassment. A teacher or other employee of the district may have witnessed the unlawful harassment. The district also may receive notice about potential unlawful harassment in an indirect manner, from sources such as a member of the local community or the media.

8. **Retaliation** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to a harassment complaint, or who has opposed any act of practice of unlawful harassment prohibited by state or federal law. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.
9. **School administrator** means a superintendent, principal, director or his/her designee.
10. **Unlawful Harassment** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity³ that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, unsolicited derogatory remarks, jokes, demeaning comments or behavior, slurs, mimicking, name calling, graffiti, innuendo, gestures, physical contact, stalking, threatening, bullying, extorting or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures.

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

1. **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual Harassment means conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome, including sexual violence, sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or more of the following occur:

- i. submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status or progress; or

³ Effective July 1, 2007, 1 V.S.A. § 144 defines "gender identity" as "an individual's actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual's gender or gender-identity, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth."

- ii. submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student; ⁴ or
- iii. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment, including between students; or
- iv. there exists a "Relationship of a Sexual Nature". "Relationship of a Sexual Nature" means any kind of physical or verbal conduct by an employee with a student, engaged in by the employee for the purpose of obtaining power over the student through sexual activity or to gratify a sexual desire. Any employee's "Relationship of a Sexual Nature" is prohibited. The districts within RNESU will regard any "Relationship of a Sexual Nature" between an employee and a student as unwelcome by the student.

2. Racial Harassment

Racial Harassment means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, or negative references to cultural customs.

3. Creed & Religious Harassment

Creed and Religious Harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's religion or creed such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious tradition, religious clothing, religious slurs or graffiti.

4. National Origin Harassment

National Origin Harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language or ethnic slurs.

5. Marital Status Harassment

Marital Status Harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's marital status, such as comments regarding pregnancy or being an unwed mother or father.

6. Sexual Orientation Harassment

Sexual Orientation Harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's sexual orientation such as negative name calling and imitating mannerisms.

7. Gender Identity Harassment

Gender Identity Harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at an individual's actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual's gender or gender identity, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth.

⁴ This statutory definition of sexual harassment describes only the "quid pro quo" form of sexual harassment that can occur between an adult and student. However, sexual harassment may also include student to student conduct, as well as conduct that creates a hostile environment.

8. Disability Harassment

Disability Harassment includes any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition such as imitating manner of speech or movement, or interference with necessary equipment.

III. Reporting

1. Student Reporting

Any student who believes that s/he has been harassed under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute unlawful harassment, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or school administrator. If one of the designated employees or school administrator is the person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the complaint shall be immediately filed with the supervisory union non-discrimination coordinator or another school administrator.

2. School Employee Reporting

Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute unlawful harassment shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee or school administrator. Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute unlawful harassment shall immediately report the information to a designated employee. If one of the designated employees or school administrator is the person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the complaint shall be immediately filed with the supervisory union non-discrimination coordinator or another school administrator.

3. Other Reporting

Any other person, including a third party, who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute unlawful harassment under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or school administrator.

4. Documentation of the Report

If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in an unlawful harassment complaint form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses. Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will have a reasonable opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence in support of their position.

5. False Complaint

Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding unlawful harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of unlawful harassment when the person has a good faith belief that unlawful harassment occurred or is occurring.

IV. Procedures Following a Report

1. Notification⁵

Upon receipt of a complaint of unlawful harassment the designated employee shall immediately inform the school administrator of the complaint. In addition, the designated employee shall immediately provide a copy of this policy to the complainant and accused individual. If either the complainant or the accused individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be: (1) promptly notified that a complaint of unlawful harassment has been filed and provided with a copy of this policy; (2) notified in writing of the results of the complaint investigation, (all notification letters shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. A school administrator may seek waiver of confidentiality rights of the accused in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that unlawful harassment or other misconduct occurred); and (3) notified at the conclusion of the investigation if an alternative dispute resolution method will be offered if appropriate and, if it occurs, of the outcome of any such attempt.

2. Investigation⁶

The School District/Supervisory Union shall promptly act upon any information regarding unlawful harassment of which it has notice. No later than one school day after the filing of a complaint, a designated employee will initiate, or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation. Nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. If unique circumstances are present and documented, the school administrator may need to extend timeframes and notify the parties of such. A school's investigation is different from any law enforcement or other outside investigation, which do not relieve the school of its independent obligation to investigate the alleged conduct. Schools should not wait for the conclusion of a criminal investigation or criminal proceeding to begin their own investigation. For example, a school should not delay conducting its own investigation or taking steps to protect the complainant because it wants to see whether the alleged perpetrator will be found guilty of a crime. After receiving notice of the alleged conduct, the school shall provide a copy of its unlawful harassment policy to the alleged victim and perpetrator, or their parent and/or guardian (if applicable). The School District/Supervisory Union shall take prompt and effective action as appropriate that is reasonably designed to stop the unlawful harassment and prevent further unlawful harassment or misconduct from rising to the level of unlawful harassment. Additional interim measures (such as no contact orders, employee leave, modification to instructional settings, schedules or transportation, etc.) may be taken to protect parties of both sides while the investigation is pending. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

⁵ See 16 V.S.A. § 14(a).

⁶ See 16 V.S.A. § 565(b)(1)(E).

3. Standard Used to Assess Conduct

In determining whether the conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the investigating official shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The complainant and accused are provided the opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The school district or Supervisory Union will also consider the impact of relevant off-campus conduct on the in-school environment where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

4. Completion of Investigation and Report

No later than five (5) calendar days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written determination to both the accused and complainant. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes unlawful harassment. When the determination concludes that an accused student has engaged in unlawful harassment, the school administrator shall use his or her discretion to decide the appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies.

5. Action on a Substantiated Complaint

If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes unlawful harassment, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment, prevent any recurrence of harassment, and remedy the impact of unlawful harassment on the victim(s). Such action may include warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee.

6. Alternative Dispute Resolution⁷

Following an investigation into conduct that may constitute unlawful harassment and reaching a conclusion as to whether the school's policy was violated, schools officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. However, mediation is not an appropriate means of resolving sexual violence complaints. The following should be considered before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods for other types of complaints: (1) the nature of the accusations; (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual; (3) the agreement of the complainant; and (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual.

⁷ See 16 V.S.A. § 565(b)(1)(C).

7. Appeal

A complainant, or person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it, may appeal the determination and/or the disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with the school district or Supervisory Union discipline policy, applicable statutes, or collective bargaining agreements. Appeals should be made to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the determination from the investigation. The Superintendent will respond in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the appeal, unless special circumstances are present and documented.

8. Independent Review⁸

A complainant may request an independent review if s/he: (1) believes that the school did not correctly analyze the complaint and failed to conduct an investigation of the incident because the school believed the alleged conduct did not constitute possible unlawful harassment; (2) is dissatisfied with the final determination following an investigation as to whether unlawful harassment occurred; or (3) believes that although a final determination was made that unlawful harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the superintendent of schools. Upon such request, the superintendent shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 565(f), and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation. Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: (1) as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any unlawful harassment found to have occurred, and (2) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Commissioner. The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the School District/Supervisory Union. The District/Independent School may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

9. Retaliation

It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of unlawful harassment or against a person who assists or participates in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to an unlawful harassment complaint or who has opposed any act of practice of unlawful harassment prohibited by state or federal law. A person may violate this anti-retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of unlawful harassment is substantiated.

⁸ See 16 V.S.A. § 565(f).

V. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

1. The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the School District's/Supervisory Union's obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.
2. The Superintendent shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the School District/Supervisory Union in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

VI. Reporting to Other Agencies

When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901, et seq.

If an unlawful harassment complaint is made in a public school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under the State Board of Education Rules for licensing action, the principal shall report the alleged conduct to the Superintendent and the Superintendent shall report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner.

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

VII. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting

1. Dissemination of Information⁹

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

2. Training¹⁰

The school administrator shall use her/his discretion in developing age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help prevent unlawful harassment. The school administrator shall implement training for school staff within the context of professional development to enable staff to recognize, prevent and

⁹See 16 V.S.A. § 565(d).

¹⁰ See 16 V.S.A. § 565(d).

respond to unlawful harassment.

3. Data Gathering

The School Districts/Supervisory Union shall provide the Vermont Department of Education with data requested by the Commissioner.

VIII. Alternative Complaint Process

A student (or his/her parent/guardian) may file a complaint of unlawful harassment with outside agencies at any time including before, after, or in lieu of using the School District/Supervisory Union complaint procedure, such as:

State and Federal Discrimination Enforcement Agencies

1. **Vermont Human Rights Commission**
14-16 Baldwin Street, Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
Tel: (800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480
TTY: (877) 294-9200
Fax: (802) 828-2481
Complaints should be filed within 300 days of the adverse action.

2. **U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights**
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109-3921
Tel: (617) 289-0111
TDD: (877) 521-2172
Fax: (617) 289-0150
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov
Complaints should be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

Legal References: Title V, Section B, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, et seq.;

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d;
Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681, et seq.;
Family Education Rights Privacy Act; 20 U.S.C. § 1232g;
Public Accommodations, 9 V.S.A. §§ 4500, et seq.;
Education, Classifications and Definitions, 16 V.S.A. § 11a (26);
Education, Harassment, Notice and Response, 16 V.S.A. § 14;
Education, 16 V.S.A. § 140(a)(1);
Education, 16 V.S.A. § 166(e);
Education, Harassment and Hazing Prevention Policy, 16 V.S.A. § 565;
Education, Discipline, 16 V.S.A. § 1161a;
Education, Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils, 16 V.S.A. § 1162;
Child Abuse, 33 V.S.A. §§ 4911, et seq.;
Adult Protective Services, 33 V.S.A. § 6901, et seq.,
all as they may be amended from time to time.
Washington v. Pierce, 179 VT 318 (2005)

Any student or other person having inquiries or complaints concerning compliance with this Harassment Prevention policy may contact the principal or other building administrator of the school in question, or the Non-Discrimination Coordinator as follows:

Name: Marsha Bruce
Title: Non-Discrimination Coordinator
Address: 49 Court Dr., Brandon, VT 05737
Telephone number: (802) 247-5757

Name: Debbie Alexander/Melanie Parker
Title: Principal/Nurse
Address: 3447 US Route 7, Pittsford, VT 05763
Telephone number: (802) 483-6361

The Non-Discrimination Coordinator and building administrator(s) above have been designated by the RNEU to coordinate efforts to comply with the above stated anti-harassment policy and state anti-harassment laws. Copies of the policies and procedures are available from them

Hazing Policy

Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union
School(s): All

Policy Code: JFD

HAZING POLICY

I. Policy

The State of Vermont has determined that hazing is unlawful. Vermont Act 120 - An Act Relating to the Crime of Hazing 16 V.S.A. 140a et seq. The Board also prohibits staff members and adults who are working with such groups from participating in, condoning and/or directing such activities by students or student groups. It is the policy of the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (hereinafter "District") that all its schools provide safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environments. Hazing has no place in the District's schools and will not be tolerated.

Accordingly, the District adopts the following policy and procedures to prohibit hazing and will ensure the enforcement thereof.

II. Definitions

"Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the District; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. "Hazing" also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.

Examples of hazing include:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electrical shocks, placing a harmful substance on or in the body, or other similar activity; or
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or other activity that creates or results in an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student; or
3. Any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that subjects a student to an unreasonable risk or harm; or
4. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires a student to perform a duty or task, which involves the commission or a crime or an act of hazing.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers the legitimate curricular, extracurricular, or military training program goals provided that the goals are approved by the Board of School Directors of the District and provided that the activity or conduct furthers those goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the Board, and normal and customary for similar public school programs. An example of this exception might be reasonable athletic training exercises.

“Organization” means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporations, order, society, corps, cooperative, club or other similar group, whose members primarily are students of the District, and which is affiliated with the District.

“Pledging” means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.

“Principal” means the principal of a school or the director of a technical center or any person designated by them to carry out a particular function.

“Student” means any person who: (1) is enrolled in any school or program operated by the District, (2) has been accepted for admission into any school or program operated by the District, or (3) intends to enroll in any school or program operated by the District during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

III. Notification of Hazing Policy

Annually, the student handbook shall contain: (1) a description of this hazing policy in age-appropriate language, (2) examples of hazing and (3) a listing of those persons whom the principal has designated to receive reports of hazing.

Each school shall adopt and implement a comprehensive plan for responding to student misbehavior. To the extent appropriate, the plan shall promote the positive development of youth. The plan shall include a description of behaviors on and off school grounds which constitute misconduct and a description of misconduct including harassment, bullying, and hazing, particularly those behaviors which may be grounds for expulsion. The plan shall also include a description of misconduct, although serious, which does not rise to the level of harassment or bullying.

IV. Reporting of Hazing

Students who have reason to believe that an incident of hazing might or did occur shall report such belief to any coach of an extracurricular team, teacher, school nurse, guidance counselor, or school administrator. Staff members who have received such a report from a student or who otherwise have reason to believe that an incident of hazing might or did occur shall report such belief to the principal of the school, or, in the event of the unavailability of the principal, the Superintendent of Schools. The report may be in writing or orally. If the report is made orally, the receiver shall make a written record of the report.

It shall be a violation of this policy for a person to retaliate against a student or other person for reporting a suspected incident of hazing or cooperating in any investigation or disciplinary proceeding regarding an incident of hazing.

It is possible that an incident of hazing might also fall within the definition of abuse, neglect or exploitation as those terms are defined in 33 VSA §4912(2) and 33 VSA §6902(1), (7) and (9). To the extent a staff member is a mandatory reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect or abuse of disabled adults, reporting a suspected incident of hazing to the principal does not relieve the reporter of any obligations additionally to report such suspicions to the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services as set forth in 33 VSA §4914 or to the commissioner of the Department of Aging and Disabilities as set forth in 33 VSA §6904.

V. Investigation of Reports of Hazing

The principal, Sara Raabe, or in the event of the unavailability of the principal, the Superintendent's designee, Marsha Bruce, upon receipt of a report of hazing, promptly shall cause an investigation to commence. The investigation shall be timely and thorough and the findings and conclusions of the investigation shall be reduced to writing. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the investigation shall be concluded within ten school days.

VI. Disciplinary Action

If the investigation concludes a student committed an act of hazing or otherwise violated this policy, that student shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or expulsion from co- or extra-curricular activities or from school. Any disciplinary action against a student shall be subject to the procedures set forth in Policy JG, Student Discipline, as well as policies and rules of the member school.

If the investigation concludes that two or more students from the same athletic team or other co- or extra-curricular activity directed, engaged in, aided or otherwise participated in actively or passively an incident of hazing, disciplinary action may be imposed against the team or activity, including cancellation of one or more athletic contests or the entire athletic season.

It is not a defense in a disciplinary proceeding under this policy that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

Nothing in this policy shall limit or preclude the District from disciplining a student or other persons affiliated with the District under any other District policy as well as under the terms of this policy.

Incidents of hazing which are suspected of being violations of law shall be reported to law enforcement officials except as regards records protected by the Family Education Rights and Protection Act.

Cross Reference: JG: Policy on the Prevention of Bullying of Students
JO: Student Education Records
JBEAA: Preventing and Responding to Unlawful Harassment of Students

Legal Citations: 16 VSA §11 (a), §30, §140, §1161

Student Conduct and Discipline

Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union
School(s): All

Policy Code: JFC

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

I. Purpose

It is the policy of Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and its member school districts to maintain a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment via a system of classroom and school management practices, supported by consistent, clear and fair disciplinary procedures. The goal of this policy is to create an environment where the expectations for student behavior are clearly stated, are understood and accepted by students, parents and staff, and are applied in compliance with due process requirements. This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the school's overall discipline plan developed pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1161a.

II. Definitions

- 1. Weapon** means a device, instrument, material or substance whether animate or inanimate, which, when used as it is intended to be used, is known to be capable of producing death or serious bodily injury.
- 2. Knife** means any instrument that is capable of ready use as a stabbing weapon that may inflict bodily injury or death.
- 3. School** means any setting which is under the control and supervision of the School District. It includes school grounds, facilities, and school-sponsored events whether held on or off of school grounds and vehicles used to transport students to and from school or school activities.
- 4. Expelled** means the termination of educational services for the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer.

III. Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each student to contribute to a safe and productive learning environment in the school by demonstrating respect and consideration for fellow students and adults. This includes complying with all policies and rules of conduct of the School District and individual classrooms.

IV. Administrative Responsibilities

The Principal, in consultation with the educational staff, will develop overall discipline procedures pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1161a.

The plan will include clear guidelines for student behavior. The guidelines may include provisions for the suspension or expulsion of students who engage in misconduct on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school. The guidelines may also include provisions for the suspension or expulsion of students who engage in misconduct not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity where direct harm to the school can be demonstrated or where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

The guidelines for student behavior will also include prohibitions against the possession by students of dangerous instruments (i.e. knives or other weapons) while at school, and shall allow disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for violations of the prohibition against knives, weapons and dangerous instruments that are not possessed at school as part of an educational program sponsored or sanctioned by the school.

Behavioral expectations, and the consequences of misconduct, will be stated in the student handbook and other publications distributed to students and parents/guardians.

Legal References: 16 V.S.A. §1161a (discipline)
16 V.S.A. §1162 (suspension and expulsion)
20 U.S.C. §§1400 et seq. (IDEA)
29 U.S.C. §794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
VT State Board of Education Manual of Rules & Practices § 4311; 4312;
4313; 2120.8.12

Policy Cross References: JFCI: Student Drug and Alcohol Use
JFCJ: Weapons
JFG: Search, Seizure and Interrogation of Students

PUBLIC NOTICES

State and Federal Laws

The bulletin board in the Lothrop office contains the following posters: Worker's Compensation Law, Job Safety and Health Protection Law, Minimum Wage Law, Employers' Reinstatement Liability Law, Child Labor Law, Parental and Family Medical Leave Law, Sexual Harassment Law, Smoking Policy Law, Unemployment Insurance Poster, Employee Polygraph Protection Act, Equal Employment Opportunity, Family and Medical Leave Act, Minimum Wage Act, Occupational Safety and Health Act, Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Homeless Education Assistance Act, Notice to Workers with Disabilities.

REPORT CARDS/PARENT CONFERENCES

Report Cards are sent home on a trimester basis. In addition, parent conferences are held in the fall and again in the spring. As Lothrop and schools across the country adopt national *Common Core* standards, our report card has been revised to more accurately reflect these standards.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

The Otter Valley Unified Union, of which Lothrop School belongs to, meets on the third Wednesday of each month. The meetings will rotate between all of the elem schools so that all members are use to all of the school.

SCIENCE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Four Winds Nature Program

In cooperation with the Four Winds Nature Institute, the Lothrop School offers the "Four Winds Nature Program." This unique science enrichment program is presented to students in grades K through 4. Volunteers are trained by Four Winds staff in a workshop environment. Programs are then run in each class once a month. The cost of materials and the services of the Four Winds staff are covered largely by the community donations and school based fund raising activities. Four Winds Nature Institute and the Lothrop Four Winds volunteers contribute significantly to the success of our science program.

SERVICES

Food Service Program

Lothrop School offers a state approved child nutrition program to all students in Grades K through 6 through a food service management company. The approved program includes breakfast, lunch and snack milk. The cost is modest and a federal subsidy is available to help fund the meals and milk for those who cannot afford to pay. Parents are asked to pay weekly. Payment in advance is encouraged, as only three meals will be served on credit. Parents can pay online by going to www.abbeygroup.net

Health Services

Our school health office is staffed by a full-time registered nurse. The nurse provides students with health appraisal and supervision, health counseling, emergency and first aid care. The school takes steps to control communicable diseases within the school.

Health services are provided to every student. Annual screening and referral for vision and hearing are provided.

The nurse serves as a member of the Educational Support Team. She teaches the growth and development units of the health curriculum. She serves as a consultant to teachers on health education units. The emphasis is on helping students make healthy choices for themselves.

Today many children are able to attend regular school because of the effective use of prescribed medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illnesses. It is more desirable for medication to be administered in the home; however, any student who is required to take prescribed medication during the regular school day must comply with the following regulations:

Prescription Medication:

- G. Written orders from a physician detailing the name of the student, the drug dosage, reason for giving and time medication is to be given must be received by the school nurse before the medication can be given. A renewal of a long-term medication order is required each school year.
- H. Written permission from the parent/guardian of the student requesting that the school district comply with the physician's order must accompany the physician's order.

Non-Prescription Medication:

- 1. The school nurse must be notified, in writing, by the parent/guardian if a non-prescription medication is to be used during school hours or activities. A physician's order is not necessary for non-prescription medications.
- 2. Medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Please, no baggies, envelopes, etc. Medication permission forms are available in the school nurse's office.

School Counselor Services

The Lothrop Elementary School has a full time School Counselor. Our school counselor services are based on the belief that each person is unique. Each one has a right to acceptance and has the responsibility for self-fulfillment in our rapidly changing world through informed decision-making and learning from the consequences of those decisions.

We believe that each individual student strives to develop into a fully functioning and constructive person. Our school counselor works with students to help them function effectively in cognitive, emotional, personal, physical and social ways. The school counselor is involved in three basic roles, each with specific goals. He/she is an advocate to and for the needs, responsibilities and rights of students, as an advisor to parents and peer educators, and as a professional leader who promotes and contributes to each student's full development.

School counselor services are available to all students in our school community.

SOCIAL CURRICULUM

Beliefs:

We believe that an effective social curriculum involves both prevention and discipline. Our aim is to foster independence and allow children to work toward more freedom and control over their lives. In the process of allowing freedom, we understand that they will be asked to make some hard choices and face both the pleasant and unpleasant consequences for those choices. We want children to develop strong self-concepts, concern for others, social awareness and a sense of community, with the aid of concerned and caring adults. The Lothrop School has adopted as a model The Responsive Classroom and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. Both models assist us in our efforts to shape our community needs as a school.

Basic Rules:

- * Be Safe
- * Be Responsible
- * Be Respectful

Proactive Management Strategies

The Lothrop School is committed to creating an environment that is proactive in its efforts to create a place that develops and strengthens social skills such as cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self-control. The Responsive Classroom stresses six components:

1. Classroom Organization
2. A Morning Meeting and/or Conflict Resolution
3. Rules and Logical Consequences
4. Choice Time
5. Guided Discovery
6. Assessment and Reporting to Parents

Any of these six components can be implemented independently and enhance the social and academic curriculum of any classroom or school.

PBiS Proactive:

Paw Tokens

- Given with positive behavior specific statements that do not include emotions
- Name the specific behavior and expectation met

Classroom Collection

- Tokens are handed out by any adult in the school
- Students put their tokens in their classroom's mason jar

Paw Stamp

- When students put a Paw into their class jar, they place a paw stamp next to their name on the class list that is next to the mason jar
- Once a student gets 5 stamps next to their name, they got to put a Paw up by the Pawsitive Pittsford Panthers Bank

Class Jar Filled

- Student Selected Classroom Celebration
- Fill out sheet and send it to the office
- Announced on morning announcements
- Tokens added to Pawsitive Pittsford Panthers Bank at the announced day and time so others may come and cheer

All School Celebration

- Once the Pawsitive Pittsford Panthers Bank is filled to the goal line, there is an all school celebration that the leadership team plans

Ways We Promote Social Skills

- Use eye contact, touch, smile
- Use words of respect
- Listen and show you have heard
- Acknowledge feelings
- Give choices
- Ask rather than tell
- Model and teach problem solving skills
- Use intervention strategies as soon as signs of trouble begin
- Post the rules in each classroom, office, gym, etc. Students design posters for each rule.
- Recognize those students who are positive role models through a variety of activities throughout the year.

The Lothrop School Staff is committed to the prevention of problems before they arise. Currently, we have a number of programs designed to help students grow as positive contributing members of our school community and the Pittsford community:

- i. Classroom groups run by teacher
- ii. Social skills groups run by Special Education, Speech/Language and Guidance
- iii. Project Adventure
- iv. K-6 Drug and Alcohol Prevention
- v. Family Life Curriculum

Reactive Management Strategies

EXPECTATIONS, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our goal is to provide the support for students to be kind, respectful, caring and responsible students and citizens. This goal is realized when:

- There is a safe, challenging, engaging and positive learning environment
- Children learn and practice social skills of cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control
- Students feel respected, valued, successful and share a sense of belonging and ownership
- All members of our school community will model expected behaviors

Guiding Principles:

Guidelines for discipline and behavior should incorporate the principles of safety, responsibility, and respect

Levels:

There is a continuum of response (ie. major vs minor) that identify behaviors of concern and a range of responses. Staff will respond to inappropriate behavior quickly and with effective strategies in each classroom and in common areas (such as hallways, cafeteria, multipurpose room, playground). More frequent and/or more intense behaviors will result in response and intervention by the Principal.

Minors (Low Intensity Behaviors): These behaviors interrupt the learning environment but do not normally require dismissal from the setting:

- **Consequence:** In-Class Time Out or Time Out from Activity or Location, Buddy Classroom
- **Process:** Instructional Prompt—Verbal Redirect, Non-Directive Prompt—Verbal Plan.

Classroom teacher notified. Notice may be sent home in homework folder, phone call home.

Repeated minor behaviors will be moved to a major if they are repeated

Examples: Defiance, Disrespect, Non-Compliance, Disruption, Dress Code, Inappropriate Language, Non-Threatening Physical Contact, Low intensity Property Misuse, Tardy, Non-serious Technology Violation

Majors These behaviors disrupt the learning environment to such an extent that the teacher/staff member must remove the student from activity or setting temporarily.

- **Consequence:** Loss of privileges, recess detention, call home, Immediate Behavioral Intervention Placement, Suspension, Change of Placement, Social Restriction Plan
- **Process:** Discipline referral to Student Support Room by staff member who intervened. Written plan may be developed for continued behaviors. Call home by Classroom Teacher or Student Support Professional, Discipline Notice or Formal Letter. Possible Board hearing in some circumstances. Referral for additional support.

Examples: Abusive Language, Disruptive Defiance, Disruptive Disrespect, Disruptive Non-Compliance, Repeated dress code, Fighting, Theft, Harassment, Bullying, Lying, Cheating, Deliberate Physical Aggression, Property Destruction, Inappropriate use of technology, Use/possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, Weapons, Bomb Threat, Inappropriate displays of affection

Specific Behavior Plans

Students on specific behavior plans may require responses that are an exception to the levels established.

STUDENT EARLY DISMISSAL

All students leaving school early must be picked up in the office and signed out. Our primary concern is the safety and welfare of the children.

STUDENT LATE ARRIVAL

Students who arrive after 8:05 must report to the office to sign in before going to class.

TELEPHONE USE

Each classroom has its own phone and voice mail. If there is an emergency, your call will be put through immediately; if it is not an emergency and the teacher is in class, the call will be put through to his/her voice mail and each teacher will retrieve his/her own voice mail messages. Students' use of the phone will be under the guidance of their teacher and is only for emergency purposes. This does not include such calls as permission to go to someone's home or to stay for a game. These activities should be prearranged.

TRANSPORTATION

Please refer to the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Transportation Handbook.

UNIFIED ARTS PROGRAMS

Art

The school Art program helps students develop skills in a wide variety of art media through independent projects as well as ones that are coordinated with basic classroom subjects. The program also provides students with instruction in art history, art criticism, ethnic arts, visual problem solving and the development of personal creativity.

Library

The Lothrop School Library is open daily from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Students may borrow books for both research and recreational reading. We have a reference section with both print and electronic resources. A special resource shelf is also available to parents and teachers.

Music

All grade levels, K-6, have a general music class once a week. The elements of music: rhythm, melody, harmony, form, texture, dynamics, expression and time and origin are taught through singing songs, creative movement, dance and playing rhythm instruments. Students also learn to write music notation, create original melodies using technology, and listen to and study the music of famous composers and world cultures.

Students in grades 4 - 6 may take instrumental music lessons. These lessons are offered on a variety of wind, brass and percussion instruments and are offered during the school day, once a week. Each child learns to assemble and care for his/her instrument and to produce pleasant tones. Practice time is important to ensure steady improvement in rhythm and tone quality.

Band is offered to both beginning and more advanced students. Each group meets once a week and works as a team learning to make music as a performing group.

Chorus is open to students in grades 5 and 6. The only requirement is for participants to be interested in and enjoy singing. Children learn to use their voices correctly, sing in two-part harmony, and perform in front of an audience. We meet once a week for 40 minutes during the school day and enjoy many types of music, such as rounds, partner songs, folk tunes and pop hits.

Physical Education

The Physical Education program at Lothrop provides an opportunity for students to develop motor skills and acquire an understanding of movement concepts. These skills and concepts are the foundation for sports, dance and lifetime fitness and leisure activities.

Physical education classes also provide an opportunity for students to practice responsible social behavior and communication skills in a physical activity setting. The program is designed to enable students to enjoy an active, healthy lifestyle now and in the future.

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

For activities outside of the school day or by non-school groups, a building use form must be completed and turned in for approval prior to the beginning of the activity.

Non-school activities will be considered only if the time and facility are not otherwise being used. If a non-school activity is scheduled and a school activity becomes scheduled later, the school activity will take precedence.

A building use form may be picked up at the Lothrop School office where the calendar of building use is maintained.

VIDEO/PHOTO PERMISSION

Occasionally the school would like to videotape/photograph students or their work as part of a class project, to include on our school Web page, to include in newspaper articles, or for other educational purposes. Please let the school know if you do not wish your child's picture or pictures of his/her work to be included.

Students will not be permitted to take pictures, videos or recordings of other students during any school events, unless it is connected to work that is being done in the classroom and with permission from school staff. This includes bus rides to and from school and evening school events.

VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at Lothrop. All visitors must, however, report to the office, identify themselves, sign in stating the reason for their visit, wear a nametag while in school, and sign out once their visit is completed.

Parents wishing to visit a child's class or participate in some aspect of the school program, such as lunch, are encouraged to make arrangements in advance. They should call the teacher and/or the secretary in the office and stop by to sign in when visiting a class even if arrangements have been made.

NOTES