

VERNON E. WIGHTMAN Primary School

2023-2024

PARENT and STUDENT HANDBOOK



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TIME SCHEDULE	3
DRIVING CHILDREN TO SCHOOL.....	3
PHONE CALLS TO SCHOOL.....	3
PERMISSION SLIPS.....	4
HOMEWORK	4
ATTENDANCE	5
ABSENCES.....	6
TARDINESS.....	7
ATTENDANCE APPEALS.....	7
SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM	7
PUPIL PLACEMENT POLICY FOR GRADES K-3	8
ACADEMIC SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES	8
REPORTING TO PARENTS	9
GRADING	9
SCHOOL CLOSING AND SNOW DAYS.....	10
BIRTHDAYS.....	10
DISCIPLINE PLAN	10
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	11
PARENTS, CAREGIVER, AND/ OR GUARDIANS RESPONSIBILITIES.....	11
DRESS CODE.....	12
PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT.....	13/14
REPORTED VIOLATION.....	15 - 33
BUS SAFETY.....	34/35
BUS STOP POLICY.....	34
BUS SAFETY RULES	34
CONSEQUENCES	34
WHEN SCHOOL IS DISMISSED	35
CAFETERIA	36
BREAKFAST PROGRAM.....	36
CELL PHONES.....	37
TOYS	37
VOLUNTEERS.....	37
CHAPERONES	37

INTRODUCTION:

Entering School is a big step in a child's development. These early years are of vital importance to a child's educational and emotional growth. In order to insure a better understanding between home and school, we have compiled this handbook. We hope it will serve as a guide to parents and students and clarify the rules, responsibilities and requirements for all. Through working together, it is our hope to provide a happy and successful period in your child's educational experience. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Vernon E. Wightman Primary School at 776-3301 ext. 1061 for assistance.

It is very important for all parent/ guardians to read and discuss this handbook with their children. Please keep it handy throughout the school year for easy reference.

TIME SCHEDULE:

8:05 a.m.-8:40 a.m. Breakfast available in the cafeteria – Breakfast students can be dropped off at the main entrance for grades 2 and 3 or at the bus loop for grades UPK, K, and 1 at 8:05-8:20am.

8:40 a.m. Doors will be opened to admit students to the school and their classrooms. PARENTS ARE ASKED NOT TO ALLOW THEIR CHILDREN TO ARRIVE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8:40 AM, UNLESS THEY ARE EATING BREAKFAST. There are personnel available to supervise your children before this time.

8:55 a.m. School begins. Students arriving in their classroom after 8:55 are marked tardy the exception being late bus arrivals.

2:45 p.m. Dismissal of UPK students being picked up.

3:00 p.m. Dismissal of walkers and those riding in private vehicles, Grades K-3.

3:10 p.m. Dismissal of bus students, Grades UPK-3.

PHONE CALLS TO SCHOOL:

If you need contact your child's teacher please call the office to leave a message. The teacher will call you back at their earliest convenience.

PERMISSION SLIPS:

The following types of permission slips, written by a parent, caregiver or legal guardian, must be approved by the principal:

Be sure to write your child's first and last name and their teacher's name on the note.

Please report to the office whenever it is necessary to take your
child out of school prior to regular dismissal.

If a note was sent requesting that a student be released for an appointment, please be prompt and be prepared to meet your student in the office at the time you designated on the note.

It is extremely important to note that due to many custodial issues within our district, only parents or legal guardians may pick up his/her child. (Other relatives, boyfriends/girlfriends, **significant others/step- parents**, or family friends are **not** allowed to take a child without parental permission.) This is a safety precaution for all our students.

HOMEWORK:

The purpose for homework is to reinforce the child's understanding of the material covered in class. Through homework, your child is given the chance to practice new skills on his/her own. These skills will be important to him/her as he/she grows older.

Homework is an important means of developing qualities of responsibility, self-discipline, and initiative. Therefore, parental support for this aspect of a child's education is appreciated. At the primary level, a general guideline for homework is 5-10 minutes a night per grade level. Therefore, 1st grade students should spend about 10 minutes a night on "homework"; 2nd grade students should spend about 20 minutes a night on "homework" and 3rd graders should spend about 30 minutes a night on "homework". If your child is spending more time than this general guideline, it is important to contact his/her teacher.

Many times, students are given the opportunity to work on their assignments during the school day and therefore complete their work. In addition, there are days when teachers do not assign homework. In either case, it is beneficial for your child to do some type of school related activity. Below is a list of some activities that are helpful to all children.

- Read
- Practice spelling words
- Cook with an adult
- Write a shopping list
- Tell someone a story
- Go on a nature walk with someone

Your child's teacher may offer you additional suggestions on how to help your child at home.

ATTENDANCE:

A major goal of the Bath Central School District is to have the opportunity to educate each student every day. A student is unable to take full advantage of the programs available if he/she is not present in school. There is a known correlation between attendance and academic performance. Our viewpoint on attendance is straight forward: regular attendance is a condition for success in school.

The following attendance policy is based on the above beliefs:

- Each student must be in attendance a minimum of eighty-five percent (or 153 school days) during the academic year.
- Absences in excess of 15% (or 26 days) may be a factor when considering placement for the next school year.
- When a student is to be out of school for an anticipated extended period of time due to illness certified by a physician, the parent must contact the school to arrange for home tutoring. When a student is receiving home tutoring, he/she is considered to be in attendance at school.
- Proper and timely notification will be given to all parents/students who may be in danger of reaching the maximum number of absences.

Notification will be as follows for excessive absentees:

First warning: 10 absences -- a letter will be sent home.

Second warning: 20 absences -- a letter will be sent home and a conference will be requested.

Third warning: 27 absences -- a letter will be sent home and the school resource/attendance officer may be sent to the home to talk to the parents and /or guardian.

- A student who has been absent due to a legal excuse as defined by New York State Education Law, will be given up to five (5) additional days for makeup opportunity for each day of a legal absence in which to complete assignments, tests, or homework. Work completed within this time frame will be credited as classroom participation without penalty for lateness.

Notification will be as follows for students who are excessively tardy:

First warning: 10 days -- a letter will be sent home.

Second warning: 20 days – a letter will be sent home; attendance officer may visit the home.

Third Warning: 20+ days – School Resource/ Attendance Officer will visit the home.

ABSENCES:

When it is necessary for your child to be absent, please notify the Office at 776-3301 ext. 1061. When your child returns from an absence a written excuse must be provided by the parent the first day the child returns. *****Please write the teachers name and the child's first and last name on the note.***** A statement of specific reason is required by law. The following is an example of an appropriate excuse.

May 5, 20 <i>(Date excuse is written)</i>		
Mr. Smith <i>(Name of teacher)</i>		
Mary Smith <i>(Student)</i>	was absent from school on Friday, May 2, 20 <i>(Date of absence)</i>	because she had a cold. <i>(Reason)</i>
<hr/> <i>(Teacher name)</i>		
<hr/> <i>(Parent/Guardian Signature)</i>		

The following reasons for student absences from school are recognized as valid by the Board of Education:

1. Illness
2. Sickness or death in the family
3. Medical, dental and/or health related treatments
4. Impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
5. Religious observance
6. Sickness requiring attendance at a medical clinic
7. Approved school-sponsored trips
8. Quarantine
9. Required court appearances

A written excuse with the original parent signature is required for each of the above and the following circumstances:

- Illness
- Tardiness
- Inability to take Physical Education because of a health problem or injury. An excuse from your physician is required
- **Make sure to write your child's first and last name and the teacher's name on the note.**

*Please remember a written excuse does not guarantee the above will be considered legal. *

Special Evening Activity Attendance: Any child that is absent from school or who is sent home by the school nurse on the day of a special evening activity; (ie: choral or grade concert performance) will **NOT** be allowed to participate in that evening's activity.

TARDINESS:

A student is considered tardy if they arrives after 8:55 a.m. All tardiness will result in the student making up any work that was missed. The principal will address excessive tardiness with the parents and student.

ATTENDANCE APPEALS:

All attendance records including absences and tardy dates are kept electronically. Should you question your child's record, please contact the school principal. If your questions are not answered and you wish to appeal your child's record, please contact the Superintendent.

SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM:

Purpose: To encourage optimal level of health so students may achieve their top levels of educational potential.

1. **Medication--** Medication may be given at school only if absolutely necessary. Over-the-counter medication is included in these guidelines. The following requirements must be followed:
 - The school nurse must have on file a written request form signed by both the family physician and the parent. This order must be received each year.
 - **The medication shall be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent.** Each individual medication must be delivered in a properly labeled container. Classroom teachers or bus drivers are not allowed to administer medication.
 - **Children are not permitted to deliver medication to school.**
2. **Emergency Care for Illness or Injury**
 - School authorities are responsible to provide emergency care for illness or injuries, which occur while children are under the jurisdiction of the school. Responsibility for providing medical care beyond first aid is strictly the obligation of the parent.
 - **Parents should plan to assume custody of a sick or injured child at the school and will assume responsibility for the child's transportation. It is important that your child's teacher have on record your home phone number, listed or unlisted, and work phone number so that you can be contacted in case of emergency. A back-up emergency phone number must be kept on file as well.**
 - **Please keep your school informed of any changes in the adult or physician whom you wish to be responsible for your child in case you cannot be reached for an emergency.**
 - Any student who is medically excused from Physical Education classes must present a doctor's excuse detailing the reasons. In addition, if the child is excused from Physical Education, he/she will not be allowed to participate in recess.
3. **Screening Procedure**
 - The Health Program includes yearly appraisal of the student's height, weight, vision and hearing. Physical examination and scoliosis screening are given to designated grades and to students new to our district. If abnormalities are discovered, parents are notified.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

If you move or have a change in your phone number, please notify the school secretary immediately so your child's records remain updated.

PUPIL PLACEMENT POLICY FOR GRADES K-3:

The school's main goal is to promote academic growth for its pupils. Increasingly, however, the school is held accountable for the overall growth and well being of its students. With this in mind, the school must consider the needs of each pupil to assure his/her best placement. According to New York State Education Law, the Board of Education reserves the right to make the final placement in cases of dispute.

There are several factors that are considered for promotion to the next grade or retention in the same grade. Some of these factors include the student's learning rate, academic progress compared to the child's potential, attendance rate, ability to work independently and follow directions, behavior, attention span, and auditory or visual perception. These areas are assessed on a daily basis through teacher observation, everyday class work, and performance on class or grade level tests. In addition, regular assessments are given and the need for support services is reviewed. It is important to discuss these factors often with your child's teacher.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES:

Believing that every student can succeed, Bath Central School District is committed to providing the necessary support to help all students meet that goal. With this in mind, we offer the following academic support opportunities:

1. SPEECH, LANGUAGE, HEARING THERAPY

Some children in school have speech, language or hearing problems. In order to meet the needs of students with communication problems, we have certified Speech Pathologists trained to remediate in this area. They provide a complete program of instructional services for students in need.

By improving their communication skills, a child may gain:

- Improved ability to comprehend and learn
- More confidence in meeting people and making friends
- A better feeling about himself, both now, and as an adult

2. BLENDED CLASSROOM

A Blended classroom is a blending of Special Education students into the regular education setting. It is a blending of remedial services, special education services and regular education services. A blended classroom may be able to provide more enrichment opportunities as well. A Blended teacher provides the needed educational services. The Blended Teacher can be Special Education certified, reading certified or Regular Education certified. Services are provided based on the individual need of the student. Qualification for service is determined through a referral process to the Bath Committee on Special Education. Through a combination of consultation with classroom teachers, parents, and students, the committee develops strategies, goals, and objectives that have as their primary purpose improved mainstream academic performance.

3. RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION SERVICES (RTI)

Students needing academic support may receive help in a variety of ways such as push-in or small group pull-out, by a consultant teacher. Selection of candidates for these corrective programs is based on achievement and local assessments along with teacher recommendations. An individualized program is designed to help meet his/her individual needs. These services may be provided by a Remedial Reading staff, or the classroom teacher.

4. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The primary service provided by the School Psychologist is to administer a psycho-educational evaluation on students referred for this purpose. This evaluation will indicate a student's intellectual, emotional, academic and special abilities. It is also helpful in determining appropriate placement, programs and services. If you have concerns about your child in these areas, please contact your child's principal for further testing information.

REPORTING TO PARENTS:

In an effort to bring the school and home more closely together, we will continue parent-teacher conferences in UPK – 3rd grades. These conferences will be held during the first and third marking periods.

Report Cards will be sent home and available on the Districts Parent Portal at the end of each Marking Period. In addition, parents may receive notes regarding academic and/or behavior concerns at the 5-week marking period. The following dates are when you will receive 5 week reports and report cards:

5 Week Report Distribution Dates:

October 12
December 7
March 7
May 16

Report Card Distribution Dates:

November 9
February 1
April 5
June 26

GRADING:

The purpose of report cards at the Primary School is to give the parents a picture of their child's academic and social-emotional growth in relation to the expectations at that particular grade level. Report cards are issued four times a year. Each grade level has developed a comprehensive report card evaluating academics, effort, and classroom behaviors. Your child's teacher will thoroughly explain the report card and grading system used at the fall parent/teacher conferences.

It is important to note that a written report card cannot adequately explain your child's progress by itself. Therefore, we encourage you to participate in the scheduled Parent-Teacher conferences. These will be held twice a year, or you can contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year.

SCHOOL CLOSING AND SNOW DAYS:

In the event of an emergency while school is in session (breakdown of power or heating equipment, adverse weather conditions, civil defense, etc.), the children may be transported home early. **It is essential to instruct your children what they should do in the event that no one is home if they should arrive early.**

Emergency School closing forms will be sent home on the first day of school. These represent the times when school is closed in an **EMERGENCY** (i.e.-electrical outage, snow storms, slippery roads, etc.). These do NOT represent those days that are planned and called EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS because of parent-teacher conferences, etc. Please do not ask the school to call you in the event of an emergency closing.

With over 500 students, this would be impossible and tie up our phone lines to the extent that parents would not be able to call in with any possible changes for their children.

Emergency early school closings due to inclement weather or other emergency will be announced on our local radio station and social media before school, beginning at 6:00 a.m. You will receive an automated call from the school district notifying you of procedures as well.

BIRTHDAYS:

It is customary in the Primary School for students to celebrate their birthday in the classroom. Please contact your student's teacher to discuss this if you are interested. It is appreciated if the celebration is kept simple so that the school day schedule is not affected.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND BALLOONS/FLOWERS TO SCHOOL

It distracts the educational process and creates a safety concern on the bus.

In addition, many times, students wish to pass out party invitations to their classmates. Although it is always done with good intentions, often times students' feelings become hurt. Please do not send invitations to school

ALL PARTY TREATS MUST BE STORE BOUGHT/ PACKAGED

DISCIPLINE PLAN:

In alignment with the Bath Central School District Code of Conduct, our discipline plan is outlined below. For a complete copy of the Code of Conduct, please contact any school office.

The Board of Education ("Board") is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The district has a long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity.

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Student Rights

The district is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and civil school environment, all district students have the right to:

1. Take part in all district activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender or sexual orientation or disability.
2. Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
3. Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

B. Student Responsibilities

All district students have the responsibility to:

1. Contribute to maintaining a safe and orderly school environment that is conducive to learning and to show respect to other persons and to property.
2. Be familiar with and abide by all district policies, rules and regulations dealing with student conduct.
3. Attend school every day unless they are legally excused and be in class, on time, and prepared to learn.
4. Work to the best of their ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward their highest level of achievement possible.
5. React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
6. Work to develop strategies to control their anger.
7. Ask questions when they do not understand.
8. Seek help in solving problems that might lead to discipline.
9. Dress appropriately for school and school functions.
10. Accept responsibility for their actions.
11. Conduct themselves as representatives of the district when participating in or attending school-sponsored extracurricular events and to hold themselves to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor, and sportsmanship.

PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, and/or GUARDIANS RESPONSIBILITIES:

All parents are expected to:

1. Recognize that the education of their student(s) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school community.
2. Send their student(s) to school ready to participate and learn.
3. Ensure their student(s) attend school regularly and on time.
4. Ensure reasons for absences are documented in the school office.
5. Insist their student(s) be dressed and groomed in a manner consistent with the student dress code.
6. Help their student(s) understand that in a democratic society appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe, orderly environment.
7. Know school rules and help their student(s) understand them.
8. Convey to their student(s) a supportive attitude toward education and the district.
9. Build good relationships with teachers, other parents and their student(s) friends.
10. Help their student(s) deal effectively with peer pressure.
11. Inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
12. Provide a place for study and ensure homework assignments are completed.

DRESS CODE:

All students, staff and visitors are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their caregivers have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting.

Dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails shall:

1. Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
2. Not wear clothing that is provocative or immodest.
3. Include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
**Sneakers must be worn for P.E. class and for recess. **
4. No hats are to be worn in the school building from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm during school days, except for religious or medical purposes.
5. Not include items that are vulgar, obscene, and libelous or denigrate others on account of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

Each building principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for informing all students and their caregivers of the dress code at the beginning of the school year and any revisions to the dress code made during the school year.

Individuals who violate the dress code shall be required to modify their appearance by covering or removing the offending item and, if necessary or practical, replacing it with an acceptable item. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply with the dress code shall be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT:

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

- A. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include but are not limited to:
 1. Running in hallways.
 2. Making unreasonable noise.
 3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
 4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
 5. Engaging in any willful act, which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
 6. Computer/electronic communication misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
- B. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples of insubordinate conduct include but are not limited to:
 1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
- C. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include but are not limited to:
 1. Committing or attempting to commit an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, scratching, and biting) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
 2. Possessing a weapon, or what appears to be a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
 3. Threatening to use any weapon.
 4. Intentionally damaging or destroying school or personal property while on school property, including graffiti or arson.

D. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

Examples of such conduct include but are not limited to:

1. Stealing, lying, cheating, plagiarism or other acts of dishonesty, including violation of acceptable use policy for computer and internet use, altering records, or assisting another student in any of the above actions.
2. Using in either words, clothing, or signs, profane, lewd, vulgar, abusive language or words which may incite or offend another person.
3. Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, weight, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
4. Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or a persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning.
5. Verbal or physical intimidation.
6. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.
7. **“Harassment”** means the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical wellbeing; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; such conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse includes but is not limited to conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex (Education Law §11 [7])
8. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
9. Smoking a cigarette, cigar or pipe, or using chewing or smokeless tobacco or possession of tobacco products on school premises (including buildings or grounds) or on a bus going to or from a school function or a school-sponsored function.
10. Being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, drinking an alcoholic beverage or being in possession of an alcoholic beverage on school premises (including buildings or grounds), at a school-sponsored function, or on a bus going to or from a school-sponsored function. Alcoholic beverages shall mean and include alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine, beer and cider having alcoholic content
11. The use, possession, sale or gift of any drug or controlled substance, including marijuana or any instruments for the use of such drugs, controlled substance or marijuana such as a pipe, syringe or other paraphernalia, while on school premises (including buildings and grounds) or on a bus going to or from a school function or school sponsored function. Excepted is any drug taken in accordance with medical regulations outlined in the student handbook.
12. Look alike drug or tobacco products will be treated as a drug, alcohol, or tobacco product.
13. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
14. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
15. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.

REPORTED VIOLATION:

All students are expected to **promptly** report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, the building principal or his or her designee. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the building principal, the principal's designee or the superintendent.

I. Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following:

1. The student's age.
2. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.
3. The student's prior disciplinary record.
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.
5. Information from parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate.
6. Other extenuating circumstances.

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations.

If there is a question that the conduct of a classified student may be related to his/her disability, the student shall be referred to the Committee on Special Education for a manifestation determination hearing. If warranted, discipline shall be administered consistent with the separate requirements of this code of conduct for disciplining students with a disability.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior.

II. Disciplinary Penalties

Students who are found to have violated the district's code of conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination:

1. Oral warning
2. Written warning
3. Written notification to parent
4. Detention
5. Suspension from transportation
6. Suspension from athletic participation
7. Suspension from social or extracurricular activities
8. Suspension of other privileges
9. In-school suspension or School on Saturday for High School students
10. Removal from classroom by teacher
11. Short-term (five days or less) suspension from school
12. Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school
13. Permanent suspension from school

III. Procedures

The amount of due process a student is entitled to receive before a penalty is imposed depends on the penalty being imposed. In all cases, regardless of the penalty imposed, the school personnel authorized to impose the penalty must inform the student of the alleged misconduct and must investigate, to the extent necessary, the facts surrounding the alleged misconduct. All students will have an opportunity to present their version of the facts to the school personnel imposing the disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.

Students who are to be given penalties other than an oral warning, written warning or written notification to their parents are entitled to additional rights before the penalty is imposed. The additional rights are explained below

a. Detention

Teachers, principals and the superintendent may use after school, before school, and lunchtime detention as a penalty for student misconduct in situations where removal from the classroom or suspension would be inappropriate. When detention is imposed as a penalty, the student's parent will be notified.

b. Suspension from transportation

If a student does not conduct themselves properly on a bus, the Director of Transportation is expected to bring such misconduct to the building principal's attention. Students who become a serious disciplinary problem may have the riding privileges suspended by the building principal or the superintendent or their designees. In such cases, the student's parent will become responsible for seeing that his or her child gets to and from school safely. Should the suspension from transportation amount to a suspension from attendance, the district will make appropriate arrangements to provide for the student's education.

A student subjected to a suspension from transportation is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214, However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the building principal or the principal's designee to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

c. Suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities and other privileges

A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities or other privileges is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

d. Teacher disciplinary removal of disruptive students

A student's behavior can affect a teacher's ability to teach and can make it difficult for other students in the classroom to learn. In most instances the classroom teacher can control a student's behavior and maintain or restore control over the classroom by using good classroom management techniques. These techniques may include practices that involve the teacher directing a student to briefly leave the classroom to give the student the opportunity to regain his or her composure and self-control in an alternative setting. Such practices may include, but are not limited to: (1) short-term "time out" in a classroom or in an administrator's office; (2) sending a student to the principal's office for the remainder of the class time only; or (3) sending a student to a guidance counselor or other district staff member for counseling. Time-honored classroom management techniques such as these do not constitute disciplinary removals for purposes of this code.

On occasion, a student's behavior may become disruptive. For purposes of this code of conduct, a disruptive student is a student who is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom. A substantial disruption of the educational process or substantial interference with a teacher's authority occurs when a student demonstrates a persistent unwillingness to comply with the teacher's instructions or repeatedly violates the teacher's classroom behavior rules.

A classroom teacher may remove a disruptive student from class for up to two days. The removal from class applies to the class of the removing teacher only. Upon removal, the teacher must provide substantially equivalent educational directions and materials.

If the disruptive student does not pose a danger or ongoing threat of disruption to the academic process, the teacher must provide the student with an explanation for why he or she is being removed and an opportunity to explain his or her version of the relevant events before the student is removed. Only after the informal discussion may a teacher remove a student from class.

If the student poses a danger or ongoing threat of disruption, the teacher may order the student to be removed immediately. The teacher must, however, explain to the student why he or she was removed from the classroom and give the student a chance to present his or her version of the relevant events within 24 hours.

The teacher must complete a district-established disciplinary removal form and meet with the principal or his or her designee as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the school day, to explain the circumstances of the removal and to present the removal form. If the principal or designee is not available by the end of the same school day, the teacher must leave the form with the secretary and meet with the principal or designee prior to the beginning of classes the next school day. Within 24 hours after the student's removal, the principal or another district administrator designated by the principal must notify the student's parents, in writing, that the student has been removed from class and why. The notice must also inform the parent that he or she has the right, upon request, to meet informally with the principal or the principal's designee to discuss the reasons for the removal.

The principal will require the teacher who ordered the removal to attend the informal conference as per Education Law §3214(3) (b).

If at the informal meeting the student denies the charges, the principal or the principal's designee must explain why the student was removed and give the student and the student's parents a chance to present the student's version of the relevant events. The informal meeting must be held within 48 hours of the student's removal. The timing of the informal meeting may be extended by mutual agreement of the parent and principal.

The principal or the principal's designee may overturn the removal of the student from class if the principal finds any one of the following:

1. The charges against the student are not supported by substantial evidence.
2. The student's removal is otherwise in violation of law, including the district's code of conduct.
3. The conduct warrants suspension from school pursuant to Education Law §3214 and a suspension will be imposed.

The principal or his designee may overturn a removal at any point between receiving the referral form issued by the teacher and the close of business on the day following the 48-hour period for the informal conference, if a conference is requested. No student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher will be permitted to return to the classroom until the principal makes a final determination, or the period of removal expires, whichever is less.

Any disruptive student removed from the classroom by the classroom teacher shall be offered continued educational programming and activities until he or she is permitted to return to the classroom.

Each teacher must keep a complete log (on a district provided form) for all cases of removal of students from his or her class. The principal must keep a log of all removals of students from class.

Removal of a student with a disability, under certain circumstances, may constitute a change in the student's placement. Accordingly, no teacher may remove a student with a disability from his or her class until he or she has verified with the principal or the chairperson of the Committee on Special Education that the removal will not violate the student's rights under state or federal law or regulation.

e. Suspension from school

Suspension from school is a severe penalty, which may be imposed only upon students who are insubordinate, disorderly, violent or disruptive, or whose conduct otherwise endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.

The Board retains its authority to suspend students, but places primary responsibility for the suspension of students with the superintendent and the building principals. Any staff member may recommend to the superintendent or the principal that a student be suspended. All staff members must immediately report and refer a violent student to the principal or the superintendent for a violation of the code of conduct.

All recommendations and referrals shall be made in writing unless the conditions underlying the recommendation or referral warrant immediate attention. In such cases a written report is to be prepared as soon as possible by the staff member recommending the suspension.

The superintendent or principal, upon receiving a recommendation or referral for suspension or when processing a case for suspension, shall gather the facts relevant to the matter and record them for subsequent presentation, if necessary.

1. Short-term (5 days or less) suspension from school

When the superintendent or principal (referred to as the "suspending authority") proposes to suspend a student charged with misconduct for five days or less pursuant to Education Law §3214(3), the suspending authority must immediately notify the student orally. If the student denies the misconduct, the suspending authority must provide an explanation of the basis for the proposed suspension. The suspending authority must also notify the student's parents in writing that the student may be suspended from school, within 24 hours from the decision. Where possible, notice should also be provided by telephone if the school has been provided with a telephone number(s) for the purpose of contacting the parents.

The notice shall provide a description of the charges against the student and the incident for which suspension is proposed and shall

inform the parents of the right to request an immediate informal conference with the principal. Both the notice and the informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents. At the conference, the parents shall be permitted to ask questions complaining witnesses under such procedures as the principal may establish.

The notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place before the student is suspended unless the student's presence in school poses a danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to academic progress. If the student's presence does pose such a danger or threat or disruption, the notice and opportunity for an informal conference shall take place as soon after the suspension as is reasonable.

After the conference, the principal shall promptly advise the parents in writing of his or her decision. The principal shall advise the parents that if they are not satisfied with the decision and wish to pursue the matter, they must file a written appeal to the superintendent within five business days, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. The superintendent shall issue a written decision regarding the appeal within 10 business days of receiving the appeal. If the parents are not satisfied with the superintendent's decision, they must file a written appeal to the Board of Education with the district clerk within 10 business days of the date of the superintendent's decision, unless they can show extraordinary circumstances precluding them from doing so. Only final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner within 30 days of the decision.

2. Long-term (more than 5 days) suspension from school

When the superintendent or building principal determines that a suspension for more than five days may be warranted, he or she shall give reasonable notice to the student and the student's parents of their right to a fair hearing. At the hearing the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, the right to question witnesses against him or her and the right to present witnesses and other evidence on their behalf.

The superintendent shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in her or her discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer shall be authorized to administer oaths and to issue subpoenas in conjunction with the proceeding before him or her. A record of the hearing shall be maintained, but no stenographic transcript shall be required. A tape recording shall be deemed a satisfactory record. The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and recommendations as to the appropriate measure of discipline to the superintendent. The report of the hearing officer shall be advisory only, and the superintendent may accept all or any part thereof.

An appeal of the decision of the superintendent may be made to the Board that will make its decision based solely upon the record before it. All appeals to the Board must be in writing and submitted to the district clerk within 10 business days of the date of the

superintendent's decision, unless the parents can show extraordinary circumstances precluded them from doing so. The Board may adopt in whole or in part the decision of the superintendent. Final decisions of the Board may be appealed to the Commissioner within 30 days of the decision.

3. **Permanent suspension**

Permanent suspension is reserved for extraordinary circumstances such as where a student's conduct poses a life-threatening danger to the safety and well-being of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.

IV. Minimum Periods of Suspension

1. Students who bring a weapon to school

Any student found guilty of bringing a weapon onto school property will be subject to suspension from school for at least one calendar year. A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with state and federal law. Before being suspended, the student will have an opportunity for a hearing pursuant to Education Law §3214. The superintendent has the authority to modify the one year suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the superintendent may consider the following:

- a) The student's age.
- b) The student's grade in school.
- c) The student's prior disciplinary record.
- d) The superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective.
- e) Input from caregivers, teachers and/or others.
- f) Other extenuating circumstances.

2. Students who commit violent acts other than bringing a weapon to school

Any student who is found to have committed a violent act, other than bringing a weapon onto school property, shall be subject to suspension from school for at least five days. A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with state and federal law. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parents will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all student's subject to a short-term suspension. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parents will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all student's subject to a long-term suspension. The superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

3. Any student who repeatedly is substantially disruptive of the educational process or substantially interferes with the teacher's authority over the classroom will be suspended from school for at least five days.

A student with a disability may be suspended only in accordance with state and federal law. For purposes of this code of conduct, "repeatedly is substantially disruptive" means engaging in conduct that results in the student being removed from the classroom by teacher(s) pursuant to Education Law §3214(3-a) and this code on four or more occasions during a semester or three or more occasions

during a trimester. If the proposed penalty is the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for an informal conference given to all student's subject to a short-term suspension. If the proposed penalty exceeds the minimum five-day suspension, the student and the student's parent will be given the same notice and opportunity for a hearing given to all student's subject to a long-term suspension. The superintendent has the authority to modify the minimum five-day suspension on a case-by-case basis. In deciding whether to modify the penalty, the superintendent may consider the same factors considered in modifying a one-year suspension for possessing a weapon.

V. Referrals

1. Counseling

A student in need of counseling may be referred by appropriate school personnel or by the student's parent.

2. PINS Petition

The district may file a PINS (person in need of supervision) petition in Family Court on any student under the age of 18 who demonstrates that he or she requires supervision and treatment by:

- a) Being habitually truant and not attending school as required by part one of Article 65 of the Education Law.
- b) Engaging in an ongoing or continual course of conduct which makes the student ungovernable or habitually disobedient and beyond the lawful control of the school.
- c) Knowingly and unlawfully possesses marijuana in violation of Penal Law §221.05. A single violation of §221.05 will be a sufficient for filing a PINS

3. Juvenile Delinquents and Juvenile Offenders

The superintendent is required to refer the following students to the County Attorney for a juvenile delinquency proceeding before the Family Court:

- a) Any student under the age of 16 who is found to have brought a weapon to school or
- b) Any student 14 or 15 years old who qualifies for juvenile Offender status under the Criminal Procedure Law §1.20(42).

VI. Alternative Instruction

When a student of any age is removed from the class by a teacher or a student of compulsory attendance age is suspended from school pursuant to Education Law §3214, the district will take immediate steps to provide alternative means of instruction for the student.

VII. Discipline of Students with Disabilities

The Board recognizes that it may be necessary to suspend, remove or otherwise discipline students with disabilities to address disruptive or problem behavior. The Board also recognizes that students with disabilities enjoy certain procedural protections whenever school authorities intend to impose discipline upon them. The Board is committed to ensuring that the procedures followed for suspending, removing or otherwise disciplining students with disabilities are consistent with the procedural safeguards required by applicable laws and regulations.

1. *Authorized Suspensions or Removals of Students with Disabilities*

A. For purposes of this section of the code of conduct, the following definitions apply.

A “**suspension**” means a suspension pursuant to Education Law § 3214

A “**removal**” means a removal for disciplinary reasons from the student’s current educational placement other than a suspension and change in placement to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) ordered by an impartial hearing officer because the student poses a risk of harm to himself or herself or others.

An “**IAES**” means a temporary educational placement for a period of up to 45 days, other than the student’s current placement at the time the behavior precipitating the IAES placement occurred, that enables the student to continue to progress in the general curriculum, although in another setting, to continue to receive those services and modifications, including those described on the student’s current individualized education program (IEP), that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in such IEP, and include services and modifications to address the behavior which precipitated the IAES placement that are designed to prevent the behavior from recurring.

B. School personnel may order the suspension or removal of a student with a disability from his or her current educational placement as follows:

- a. the Board, the district (BOCES) superintendent of schools or building principal may order the placement of a student with a disability into an IAES, another setting or suspension for a period not to exceed five consecutive school days and not to exceed the amount of time a non-disabled student would be subject to suspension for the same behavior.
- b. The superintendent may order the placement of a student with a disability into an IAES, another setting or suspension for up to 10 consecutive school days, inclusive of any period in which the student has been suspended or removed under subparagraph (a) above for the same behavior, if the superintendent determines that the student has engaged in behavior that warrants a suspension and the suspension or removal does not exceed the amount of time non-disabled students would be subject to suspension for the same behavior.

- c. The superintendent may order additional suspensions of not more than 10 consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement.
- d. The superintendent may order the placement of a student with a disability in an IAES to be determined by the committee on special education (CSE), for the same amount of time that a student without a disability would be subject to discipline, but not more than 45 days, if the student carries or possesses a weapon to school or to a school function, or the student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function. (See Section IV - Prohibited Student Conduct - for the definitions of weapon, controlled substance, and illegal drugs.
- c. Subject to specified conditions required by both federal and state law and regulations, an impartial hearing officer may order the placement of a student with a disability in an IAES setting form up to 45 days at a time, if maintaining the student in his or her current educational placement poses a risk of harm to the student or others.

2. Change of Placement Rule

- A. A disciplinary change in placement means a suspension or removal from a student's current educational placement that is either:
 - 1. for more than 10 consecutive school days; or
 - 2. for a period of 10 consecutive school days or less if the student is subjected to a series of suspensions or removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than 10 school days in a school year and because of such factors as the length of each suspension or removal, the total amount of time the student is removed and the proximity of the suspensions or removals to one another.
- B. School personnel may not suspend or remove a student with disabilities if imposition of the suspension or removal would result in a disciplinary change in placement based on a pattern of suspension or removal. However, the district may impose a suspension or removal, which would otherwise result in a disciplinary change in placement, based on a pattern of suspensions or removals if the CSE has determined that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, or the student is placed in an IAES for behavior involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances.

3. Special Rules Regarding the Suspension or Removal of Students with Disabilities

A. The district's Committee on Special Education shall:

1. Conduct functional behavioral assessments to determine why a student engages in a particular behavior, and develop or review behavioral intervention plans whenever the district first suspending or removing a student with a disability for more than 10 school days in a school year or imposing a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change in placement, including a change in placement to an IAES for misconduct involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances. If subsequently, a student with a disability who has a behavioral intervention plan and who has been suspended or removed from his or her current educational placement for more than 10 school days in a school year is subjected to a suspension or removal that does not constitute a disciplinary change in placement, the members of the CSE shall review the behavioral intervention plan and its implementation to determine if modifications are necessary. If one or more members of the CSE believe that modifications are needed, the school district shall convene a meeting of the CSE to modify such a plan and its implementation, to the extent the committee determines necessary.
2. Conduct a manifestation determination review of the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior subject to disciplinary action whenever a decision is made to place a student in an IAES either for misconduct involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances or because maintaining the student in his current educational setting poses a risk of harm to the student or others; or a decision is made to impose a suspension that constitutes a disciplinary change in placement.

B. The parents of a student who is facing disciplinary action, but who has not been determined to be eligible for services under IDEA and Article 89 at the time of misconduct, shall have the right to invoke applicable procedural safeguards set forth in federal and state law and regulations if, in accordance with federal and state statutory and regulatory criteria, the school district is deemed to have had knowledge that their child was a student with a disability before the behavior precipitating disciplinary action occurred. If the district is deemed to have had such knowledge, the student will be considered a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes.

1. The superintendent, building principal or other school official imposing a suspension or removal shall be responsible for determining whether the student is a student presumed to have a disability.
2. A student will not be considered a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes if, upon receipt of information supporting a claim that the district had knowledge that student was a student with a disability, the district either:
 - A. conducted an individual evaluation and determined that the student is not a student with a disability, or

B. determined that an evaluation was not necessary and provided notice to the parents of such determination, in the manner required by applicable law and regulations. If there is no basis for knowledge that the student is a student with disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be subjected to the same disciplinary measures as any other non-disabled student who engaged in comparable behaviors. However, if a request for an individual evaluation is made while such non-disabled student is subjected to a disciplinary removal, an expedited evaluation shall be conducted and completed in the manner prescribed by applicable federal and state law and regulations.

Until the expedited evaluation is completed, the non-disabled student who is not a student presumed to have a disability for discipline purposes shall remain in the educational placement determined by the district, which can include suspension.

- C. The district shall provide parents with notice of disciplinary removal no later than the date on which a decision is made to change the placement of a student with a disability to an IAES for either misconduct involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances or because maintaining the student in his/her current educational setting poses a risk of harm to the student or others; or a decision is made to impose a suspension or removal that constitutes a disciplinary change in placement. The procedural safeguards notice prescribed by the Committee on Special Education shall accompany the notice of disciplinary removal.
- D. The parents of a student with disabilities subject to a suspension of five consecutive school days or less shall be provided with the same opportunity for an informal conference available to parents of non-disabled students under Education Law.
- E. Superintendent hearings on disciplinary charges against students with disabilities subject to suspension of more than five school days shall be separated into a guilt phase and a penalty phase in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Commissioner's regulations incorporated into this code.
- F. The removal of a student with disabilities other than a suspension or placement in an IAES shall be conducted in accordance with the due process procedures applicable to such removals of non-disabled students, except that school personnel may not impose such removal for more than 10 consecutive days or for a period that would result in a disciplinary change in placement, unless the CSE has determined that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability.
- G. During any period of suspension or removal, including placement in an IAES, students with disabilities shall be provided services as required by the Commissioner's regulations incorporated into this code.

4. Expedited Due Process Hearings

- A. An expedited due process hearing shall be conducted in the manner specified by the Commissioner's regulations incorporated into this code, if:
1. The district requests such a hearing to obtain an order of an impartial hearing officer placing a student with a disability in an IAES where school personnel maintain that it is dangerous for the student to be in his or her current educational placement, or during the pendency of due process hearings where school personnel maintain that it is dangerous for the student to be in his or her current educational placement during such proceedings.
 2. The parent requests such a hearing from a determination that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, or relating to any decision regarding placement, including but not limited to any decision to place the student in an IAES
 - a. During the pendency of an expedited due process hearing or appeal regarding the placement of a student in an IAES for behavior involving weapons, illegal drugs or controlled substances, or on grounds of dangerousness, or regarding a determination that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability for a student who has been placed in an IAES, the student shall remain in the IAES pending the decision of the impartial hearing officer or until expiration of the IAES placement, whichever comes first, unless the parents and the district agree otherwise?
 - b. If school personnel propose to change the student's placement after expiration of an IAES placement, during the pendency of any proceeding to challenge the proposed change in placement, the student shall remain in the placement prior to removal to the IAES, except where the student is again placed in an IAES. An expedited due process hearing shall be completed within 15 business days of receipt of the request for a hearing. Although the impartial hearing officer may grant specific extensions of such time period, he or she must mail a written decision to the district and the parents within five business days after the last hearing date, and in no event later than 45 calendar days after receipt of the request for a hearing, without exceptions or extension.

5. Referral to law enforcement and judicial authorities

In accordance with the provision of IDEA and its implementing regulations:

1. The district may report a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities (ex. school resource officer), and such action will not constitute a change of the student's placement.
2. The superintendent shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of a student with a disability are available for consideration to the appropriate authorities to whom a crime is reported.

a. Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. Corporal punishment of any student by any district employee is strictly forbidden.

However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, reasonable physical force may be used to:

--Protect oneself, another student, teacher or any person from physical harm.

--Protect the property of the school or others.

--Restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, powers and duties, if that student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts.

The district will file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner's regulations.

b. Student Searches and Interrogations

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring an atmosphere on school property and at school functions that is safe and orderly. To achieve this kind of environment, any school official authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty on a student may question a student about an alleged violation of law or the district code of conduct. Students are not entitled to any sort of "Miranda" - type warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact a student's parent before questioning the student. However, school officials will tell all students why they are being questioned.

In addition, the Board authorizes the superintendent, building principals, the school nurse and district security officials to conduct searches of students and their belongings if the authorized school official has reasonable suspicion to believe that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or district code of conduct.

An authorized school official may conduct a search of a student's belongings that is minimally intrusive, such as touching the outside of a book bag, without reasonable suspicion, so long as the school official has a legitimate reason for the very limited search.

An authorized school official may search a student or the student's belongings based upon information received from a reliable informant.

Individuals, other than the district employees, will be considered reliable informants if they have previously supplied information that was accurate and verified, or they make an admission against their own interest, or they provide the same information that is received independently from other sources, or they appear to be credible and the information they are communicating relates to an immediate threat to safety. District employees will be considered reliable informants unless they are known to have previously supplied information that they knew was not accurate. Before searching a

student or the student's belongings, the authorized school official should attempt to get the student to admit that he or she possesses physical evidence that they violated the law or the district code, or get the student to voluntarily consent to the search. Searches will be limited to the extent necessary to locate the evidence sought.

Whenever practicable, searches will be conducted in the privacy of administrative offices and students will be present when their possessions are being searched.

A. Student Lockers, Desks and other School Storage Places

The rules in this code of conduct regarding searches of students and their belongings do not apply to student lockers, desks and other school storage places. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these places and school officials retain complete control over them. This means that student lockers, desks and other school storage places may be subject to search at any time by school officials, without prior notice to students and without their consent.

B. Documentation of Searches

The authorized school official conducting the search shall be responsible for promptly recording the following information about each search

1. Reasons for the search.
2. Name of any informant(s).
3. Name, age and grade of student searched.
4. Purpose of search (that is, what item(s) were being sought).
5. Type and scope of search.
6. Person conducting search and his or her title and position.
7. Witnesses, if any, to the search.
8. Time and location of the search.
9. Results of search (that is, what item(s) were found).
10. Disposition of items found.
11. Time, manner and results of parent notification.

The building principal or the principal's designee shall be responsible for the custody, control and disposition of any illegal or dangerous item taken from a student. The principal or his or her designee shall clearly label each item taken from the student and retain control of the item(s), until the item(s) is turned over to the police. The principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for personally delivering dangerous or illegal items to police authorities.

C. Police/ School Resource Officer Involvement in Searches and Interrogations of Students

District officials are committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work. Police officials may enter school property or a school function to question or search a student or to conduct a formal investigation involving students only if they have:

1. A search or an arrest warrant; or
2. Probable cause to believe a crime has been committed on school property or at a school function; or
3. Been invited by school officials.

In the case of a police officer presenting a search warrant, the Building Principal shall first attempt to inform the parent or guardian of the police demand to search in order to afford the parent or guardian an opportunity to be present at the search. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be contacted prior to a police search, the parent or guardian shall be informed of the search in writing by the Building Principal as soon thereafter as is practical.

The Bath School District recognizes the necessity that students may be the subject of investigations by law enforcement and Child Protective Services. A student that may be the victim of neglect, physical or sexual abuse by a parent, guardian or other person legally responsible for said child and in those instances, the school will not contact the parents, guardians, or other legally responsible person for said child. Those contacts will be left to law enforcement and Child Protective Services as to not compromise the investigation or placing the child or other children in the home at further risks. The Bath School District will document that the student was interviewed (when, where, duration and by whom) and the nature of the interview (i.e. child abuse victim, etc.).

D. Child Protective Services Investigations

Consistent with the district's commitment to keep students safe from harm and the obligation of school officials to report to child protective services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been abused or maltreated, the district will cooperate with local child protective services workers who wish to conduct interviews of students on school property relating to allegations of suspected child abuse, and/or neglect, or custody investigations.

All requests by child protective services to interview a student on school property shall be made directly to the building principal or his or her designee. The principal or his or her designee shall set the time and place of the interview. The principal or designee shall decide if it is necessary and appropriate for a school official to be present during the interview, depending on the age of the student being interviewed and the nature of the allegations. If the nature of the allegations is such that it may be necessary for the student to remove any of his or her clothing in order for the child protective services worker to verify the allegations, the school nurse or other district medical personnel must be present during that portion of the interview. No student may be required to remove his or her clothing in front of a child protective services worker or school district official of the opposite sex.

6. *Visitors to the Schools*

The Board encourages parents and other district citizens to visit the district's schools and classrooms to observe the work of students, teachers and other staff. Since schools are a place of work and learning, however, certain limits must be set for such visits. The building principal or his or her designee is responsible for all persons in the building and on the grounds. For these reasons, the following rules apply to visitors to the schools:

1. Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student of the school will be considered a visitor.
2. All visitors to the school must report to the office of the principal upon arrival at the school. There they will be required to sign the visitor's register and will be issued a visitor's identification badge, which must be worn at all times while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the identification badge to the principal's office before leaving the building.
3. Visitors attending school functions that are open to the public, such as parent-teacher organization meetings or public gatherings, are not required to register.
4. Parents or citizens who wish to observe a classroom while school is in session are required to arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher(s), so that class disruption is kept to a minimum.
5. Teachers are expected not to take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
6. Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to the principal or his or her designee. Unauthorized persons will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
7. All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property contained in this code of conduct.

7. *Public Conduct on School Property*

The district is committed to providing an orderly, respectful environment that is conducive to learning. To create and maintain this kind of environment, it is necessary to regulate public conduct on school property and at school functions.

For purposes of this section of the code, "public" shall mean all persons when on school property or attending a school function including students, teachers and district personnel.

The restrictions on public conduct on school property and at school functions contained in this code are not intended to limit freedom of speech or peaceful assembly. The district recognizes that free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the objectives of the district. The purpose of this code is to maintain public order and prevent abuse of the rights of others.

All persons on school property or attending a school function shall conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner. In addition, all persons on school property or attending a school function are expected to be properly attired for the purpose they are on school property.

A. Prohibited Conduct

No person, either alone or with others, shall:

1. Intentionally injure any person or threaten to do so.
2. Intentionally damage or destroy school district property or the personal property of a teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
3. Disrupt the orderly conduct of classes, school programs or other school activities.
4. Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive to the school program.
5. Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
6. Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is normally closed.
7. Shall use any tobacco products on school grounds.
8. Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations or other restrictions on vehicles.
9. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
10. Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers or except as specifically authorized by the school district.
11. Loiter on or about school property.
12. Gamble on school property or at school functions.
13. Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school district officials performing their duties.
14. Willfully incite others to commit any of the acts prohibited by this code.
15. Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or Board policy while on school property or while at a school function.

B. Penalties

Persons who violate this code shall be subject to the following penalties:

1. Visitors. Their authorization, if any, to remain on school grounds or at the school function shall be withdrawn and they shall be directed to leave the premises. If they refuse to leave, they shall be subject to ejection. Attendance at future events may also be denied.
2. Students. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant, in accordance with the due process requirements.
3. Tenured faculty members. They shall be subject to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Education Law §3020-a or any other legal rights that they may h
4. Staff members in the classified service of the civil service entitled to the protection of Civil Service Law § 75. They shall be subject to immediate ejection and to disciplinary action as the facts may warrant in accordance with Civil Service Law § 75 or any other legal rights that they may have.
5. Staff members other than those described in subdivisions 4 and 5. They shall be subject to warning, reprimand, suspension or dismissal as the facts may warrant in accordance with any legal rights they may have.

C. Enforcement

The building principal or his or her designee shall be responsible for enforcing the conduct required by this code.

When the building principal or his or her designee sees an individual engaged in prohibited conduct, which in his or her judgment does not pose any immediate threat of injury to persons or property, the principal or his or her designee shall tell the individual that the conduct is prohibited and attempt to persuade the individual to stop. The principal or designee shall also warn the individual of the consequences for failing to stop. If the person refuses to stop engaging in the prohibited conduct, or if the person's conduct poses an immediate threat of injury to person or property, the principal or designee shall have the individual removed immediately from school property or the school function. If necessary, local law enforcement authorities will be contacted to assist in removing the person.

The district shall initiate disciplinary action against any student or staff member, as appropriate, with the "Penalties" section above. In addition, the district reserves its right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the code.

8. *Dissemination and Review*

A. Dissemination of Code of Conduct

The Board will work to ensure that the community is aware of this code of conduct by:

1. Providing copies of a summary of the code to all students at a general assembly held at the beginning of each school year.

2. Making copies of the code available to all parents at the beginning of the school year.
3. A summary of the code of conduct written in plain language to all parents of District students will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.
4. Providing all current teachers and other staff members with a copy of the code and a copy of any amendments to the code as soon as practicable after adoption.
5. Providing all new employees with a copy of the current code of conduct when they are first hired.
6. Making copies of the code available for review by students, parents and other community members.

The Board will sponsor an informational program for all district staff members to ensure the effective implementation of the code of conduct. The superintendent may solicit the recommendations of the district staff, particularly teachers and administrators, regarding informational programs pertaining to the management and discipline of students.

The Board of Education will review this code of conduct every year and update it as necessary. In conducting the review, the Board will consider how effective the code's provisions have been and whether the code has been applied fairly and consistently.

Before adopting any revisions to the code, the Board will hold at least one public hearing at which school personnel, parents, student and any other interested party may participate. The code of conduct and any amendments to it will be filed with the Commissioner no later than 30 days after adoption.

BUS SAFETY:

We believe all passengers can behave appropriately and safely while riding on a school bus. In order to provide any person riding the bus the safe transportation they deserve; the following plan will be enforced in addition to those responsibilities established by the Code of Conduct.

A. Bus Stop Policy

1. Every student who rides a bus to school is expected to ride the same bus home.
2. Students are expected to be ready 10 minutes prior to the designated arrival of the bus.
3. If there are questions or problems first consult you bus driver. If further information is needed, call the transportation supervisor at (607) 776-7900.

B. Bus Safety Rules

1. The bus driver is the authority on the bus.
2. Stay in your seats.
3. Do not throw objects.
4. No eating or drinking on the bus. Glass containers are not allowed.
5. Keep hands, feet, head, and objects out of the aisle and inside the bus.
6. Do not use profane, vulgar, abusive language or words which may incite another person.
7. Do not fight or cause physical harm to anyone.
8. Do not bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, firearms, knives, or other weapons on the bus.
9. Do not bring pets or objects (such as glass containers) on the bus that jeopardizes the health or safety of its passengers.
10. Do not damage or tamper with bus equipment, including seat belts.
11. The bus driver may assign seats and reassign if rules are not followed.
12. Do not commit, or participate in any willful act that disrupts the normal operation of the school bus. You are responsible and accountable for your behavior.

C. Consequences

The Transportation Department will use the following steps in response to violation(s) of the school bus safety rules and transportation policies and procedure

Level I--

- a. Driver and/or monitor warns student verbally.
- b. Driver and/or monitor files a bus conduct report with the transportation Supervisor as documentation.
- c. Driver and/or monitor and/or transportation supervisor may phone Parent/guardian to make aware of bus rule(s) violation.

Level II--

- a. Driver and/or monitor files a bus conduct report with the Transportation Supervisor as documentation.
- b. Driver and/or monitor phones parent/guardian to make aware of bus rule(s) violation.

Level III--

- a. Driver and/or monitor files a bus conduct report with the transportation supervisor.
- b. Transportation Department will attach a copy of the Level 1 and Level II bus conduct reports to the Level III bus conduct report and deliver to the principal.
- c. Principal meets with student to determine appropriate disciplinary action.
- d. Principal contacts parent/guardian.

Level IV--

- a. Driver and/or monitor files bus conduct report, accident report and any other supportive documentation in the event a student is involved in a willful action that threatens the welfare of another student or staff member.
- b. Driver and/or monitor and/or transportation supervisor will Phone parent/guardian to make aware of serious event.
- c. Transportation supervisor will deliver all documentation to Principal.
- d. Principal will meet with student to determine appropriate Disciplinary action.
- e. Principal contacts parent/guardian.

****Note:** Level IV consequences are not required to follow Levels I, II, and III in sequence. Level IV consequences are in response to a serious and dangerous action. ******

D. When school is dismissed

- a. Go directly to your own bus and board it immediately. Everyone should be on board and all bus doors closed before the first bus begins to move. Buses will not stop to pick up late students.
- b. Elementary and primary school students must board the bus at their school. They must not walk to the high school.
- c. Every student who rides a bus to school is expected to ride the bus home from school unless the driver has a note from the building principal stating that the student has permission not to ride. A signed parental note to the principal is necessary to make special arrangements for transportation.
- d. If there are questions or problems, first consult your bus driver. If further Information is needed; call the transportation supervisor at (607) 776-7900.

CAFETERIA:

BREAKFAST and LUNCH PROGRAM

We are pleased to inform parents that VEW will continue to offer free breakfast and lunch for the 2023-2024 school year. All students enrolled at VEW are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at NO CHARGE to your household for the 2023-2024 school year. No further action is required of you. Your child (ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee or to fill out an application. If you have any questions, contact 607-776-3301 X 4111.

DRIVING CHILDREN TO SCHOOL IN THE MORNING:

****If your student is eating breakfast, you are to drop your child off to school accordingly to the grade levels listed below. ****

Grades UPK, K, and 1 will be dropped off at the bus loop between 8:05am and 8:20am.

Grades 2 and 3 will be dropped off at the entrance by the flag pole between 8:05am and 8:20am.

****If your student is not eating breakfast, you are to drop your student off at the front circle between 8:40am and 8:50am. ****

Money can be sent with the students or can be mailed to the VEW Cafeteria: Attention Sheri Frail. Free and reduced lunch forms will be sent home the first week of school. Please fill out this form and return to the school—this will help us continue to offer our free breakfast and lunch program. **

A. Expected Behavior

We believe all students have the right to eat in an environment that is respectful and orderly. All students are expected to follow these rules:

1. Students are to refrain from throwing food, or paper. They are expected to pick up around their area before they leave.
2. All students need to speak to their neighbors using “inside voices”.
3. Students are expected to listen to and respect the cafeteria monitors as they perform their duties.

B. Consequences

Individuals not following the rules may have one of the following consequences, not in order of occurrence, assigned at discretion of school staff:

- Verbal warning
- Report to classroom teacher
- Written report to the office
- Notification of parents
- Preferential seating in cafeteria
- Time Out
- Detention

CELL PHONES:

Although we acknowledge the role of technology in our lives, Primary School students are in possession of a cellular phone or tablet is expected to have the device powered off and it is to be secured in their bag in their cubby.

TOYS:

Children are often anxious to bring personal toys including hand-held electronic games, trading cards and other items. However, these items often become targets of theft or trading which causes hurt feelings and sometimes disciplinary actions. Therefore, we ask that you refrain from allowing your child to bring personal toy items to school unless the student has permission from the classroom teacher for a specific purpose.

VOLUNTEERS:

Volunteers play an important role in the educational process at V.E.W. We welcome all parents or interested parties in applying to be a volunteer. Applications are available in the office and should be returned to the building principal. The building principal checks references and the Bath Police Department does a background check. Pending Board of Education approval, volunteers are assigned an appropriate place to volunteer based on need.

CHAPERONES:

Chaperones are usually needed for classroom field trips. However, the number of chaperones for each trip is determined by the trip itself, bus space, and class size. Teachers will determine how many are needed and contact parents who might be interested in participating in this capacity.

If you are asked to be a chaperone, there are a few guidelines to follow. These include:

- ◆ Chaperones must ride the bus with the students, to and from the event.
- ◆ Other children, such as younger siblings, are not allowed to attend the field trip.
- ◆ Chaperones are expected to uphold the districts code of conduct at all times. (A copy of this is available in the Primary school office.)
- ◆ Chaperones are expected to supervise the children they are assigned very closely at all times.