

Schaghticoke Middle School

Student/Parent Handbook

2022 - 2023



23 Hipp Road
New Milford, Connecticut 06776
Telephone: (860) 354-2204
Fax: (860) 210-2217
sms.newmilfordps.org

Ms. Linda Scoralick, Principal
Mr. Michael Boucher, Assistant Principal
Mr. Frank Jawdzik, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Shannon Surreira, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Tracy-Ann Menzies, Supervisor, Special Education

NEW MILFORD DISTRICT DIRECTORY

Board of Education

Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chairperson

Mr. Pete Helmus

Mrs. Olga I. Rella

Mrs. Tammy McInerney

Mr. Eric Hansell

Mr. Brian McCauley

Mr. Tom O'Brien

Mrs. Leslie Sarich

Mr. Keith A. Swanhall Jr.

Central Office Administration

JeanAnn C. Paddyfote, Ph.D., Interim Superintendent

Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Laura Olson, Director, Special Services & Pupil Personnel

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

SCHAGHTICOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Schaghticoke Middle School is made up of a community of learners: students, parents, faculty, staff, administration, and citizens of the greater New Milford area. The foundation of our vision lies upon the positive reinforcement of character: integrity, responsibility, respect, and fairness. Together we will work to create an environment in which all students can reach their potential academically, socially, and emotionally under the guidance and nurturing support of the Schaghticoke community members. We will collaborate to foster an atmosphere of trust and support in order to encourage teachers and students to explore new initiatives in curriculum and assessment to improve student achievement.

This handbook is divided into four sections: Student Life, Academics, Policies, and Discipline. Each section is organized in alphabetical order, by topic.

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SECTION 1: STUDENT LIFE

ACADEMIC HELP

Success in academics is very important and we at Schaghticoke are committed to helping each student achieve his/her best. Academic help is available in all subjects from 2:20 p.m. - 2:40 p.m. after school. Students & families should arrange, with the teacher, an appointment in advance that is mutually convenient. The purpose of academic help is to provide individual or small group attention for those students who are experiencing academic difficulty. Additionally, a student in need of extra support may be requested to attend the Academic Fitness Club that meets after school from 2:20 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.

Please note, written parent permission for students to remain after school is required. This includes extra help sessions, re-teachings, and other activities supervised by a teacher. Permission must be in written form. Signed faxes or emails will be accepted.

ACCIDENTS

Any accident involving possible injury to a student or damage to school property must be reported immediately to the teacher in charge of the area and to the administration. The New Milford Board of Education does not carry accident insurance; however, in order for an accident to be documented for possible insurance claims through personal policy coverage, certain forms must be completed and returned to the office within twenty-four (24) hours of the accident. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and complete such forms.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Regular attendance at school is an integral part of the education of each student. Grades earned in any course will reflect daily participation, as well as a fulfillment of other academic requirements established by the school. Consistent involvement and interaction of each student with curriculum, teachers, and peers are all essential elements in the maximum development of the potential of each person. Students must be actively engaged in this process on a daily basis.

Regular attendance at school is, by state statute, the serious responsibility of the parents/guardian and of the student. The administration and staff of Schaghticoke Middle School are committed to working cooperatively with parents/guardians and students to achieve regular attendance. An administrator will be assigned by the principal to supervise the attendance procedure.

The principal will give annual written notice to parents/guardians of their obligations according to Connecticut General Statute 10-184. Annually at the beginning of the academic year and whenever a new student enrolls during the year, the school district will require from the parents/guardians a telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day (i.e., from the first bell to dismissal).

Students are expected to be in school for the full daily schedule, which runs from **7:35 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.** Further commitments, such as after-school activities, special help, or disciplinary detention, may require that a student stay later.

Absentee List

Teachers are provided information about student absences on a daily basis via PowerSchool. No student should be in the school building without having officially reported. A student who is in school but listed as absent must report to the Main Office to correct the error.

Absences

Connecticut State Board of Education

Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences

Adopted June 27, 2012

The following definitions are for the use by Connecticut school districts and schools for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of section 10-198a of the Connecticut General Statutes (Policies and procedures concerning truants), and for the purpose of reporting truancy, pursuant to subsection (c) of Section 10-220 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The use of these definitions for state purposes does not preclude districts from using separate definitions of excused and unexcused absences for their internal uses (including decisions on promotion/retention, grading and disciplinary action).

Excused Absences

By state statute, a student is allowed 9 excused absences each year. A student's absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the following criteria:

A. For **absences one through nine**, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation (a written note from parent and or Dr.);

The following situations do not count toward a student's 9 excused absences:

- Field Trips
- Testing
- Travel for school activity or athletics
- Suspension from school

B. For the **tenth absence and all absences thereafter**, a student's absences from school are only considered excused for the following reasons:

1. student illness (Note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence); Excessive excused absences may result in school personnel communicating with the student's medical providers.
2. student's observance of a religious holiday;
3. death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
4. mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
5. the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason); or
6. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

Unexcused Absences

All absences from school will be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria:

1. the absence meets the criteria of excused as stated above
2. the absence is due to discipline issued by the school
3. all absences not reported by a parent /guardian call and a note are considered unexcused.
4. all absences after the 9th absence are considered unexcused unless they meet the criteria outlined in section B above

The penalty for all unexcused absences is a "0" for all work missed with no makeup privileges.

All absences excused (1-9) or unexcused (10+) require a handwritten signed note, even if there was a call. This note may be scanned/photographed and emailed to the school by parent/guardian within 10 days of the absence.

Excessive Absences

1. Students absent five (5) or more consecutive days due to illness or any communicable disease must have a doctor's statement (could be by phone) of good health to the school nurse prior to re-admission to school.

2. If a student continues to be a chronic absentee*, the principal (or designee) may contact the New Milford Juvenile Review Panel (JRP) or the Department of Children and Families (DCF)
3. Given reasonable cause to believe a student is truant from school, the school administration may ask the school social worker to visit the student's home to verify the cause of the absence. Such home visits may be scheduled outside of regular school hours.
4. The administration reserves the right not to excuse students who are chronically absent and to require written verification of reason.

* (Connecticut State Statute Sec. 10-198a – Truant: Any child between the ages of seven and sixteen who has had four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences in any school year. Sec. 10-10-Habitual Truant: Any child having twenty (20) unexcused absences within a school year).

Attendance - Participation in Activities & Events

Students must be present in school to attend afterschool or evening events. Students who are absent on the day of the event, or who are serving in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion may not attend after school or evening events. This includes participation in and attendance at athletic events.

Students who are not in the building for at least half of the day (4 hours on a full day/ 2 hours on a half day) will be marked absent for the day per the CT State Department of Education see Appendix G

Early Dismissal

Students should remain in school for the entire day (7:35 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.). The only exception will be appointments and other matters that cannot be taken care of after the close of school.

1. In general, early dismissals should be avoided, particularly if they require a student to miss any instructional time; however, should an early dismissal be required, the reasons must be consistent with the school's absence policy. Verification of the early dismissal may be required. At the time of the dismissal, parents must sign students out in the main office.
2. All requests for early dismissal must be in writing or by phone, provided by the parent/guardian submitted to the main office on the day for which early dismissal is requested.
3. Students who have an excused early dismissal are eligible to make up work and are eligible thereafter to receive full credit. Each student is responsible for getting missed assignments and submitting them on the next class day. Students who have an unexcused early dismissal will receive "0" for all work missed and do not have the right to make up any missed work.
4. Students who abuse the regulations concerning early dismissal may be denied permission to leave school early for the remainder of the term. Excessive early dismissals could result in a student not being allowed to make up missed work
5. Students who are not in the building for at least 4 hours (2 hours on a half day) will be marked absent for the day.

Tardiness

1. The school day begins at 7:35 a.m. If a student arrives after this they MUST report to the main office before going to class.
2. If a student has an unexcused tardy, they will receive a "0" for any missed work. For example, if a student arrives "tardy unexcused" at 10:00 a.m. and missed a quiz in a class the student had earlier that day, the student will receive a "0" for that quiz. Any class missed prior to arriving late to school will be considered a class cut unless the tardiness is excused.
3. If a student is at a doctor's appointment, a note must be brought from the doctor in order to excuse a tardy. An unexcused tardy means no credit for work. Missing the bus and car troubles are unexcused tardies.
4. Tardiness to all classes will be dealt with by the teacher in charge. Chronic problems in tardiness will be referred to the school administration.
5. If a tardy arrival causes the student to miss more than 4 hours (2 hours on a half day) they will be marked absent

for the day.

6. The same rules apply to athletes for them to participate in athletic events that day.

Family Vacations

Vacations disrupt the learning process. It is for that reason we ask that, except in highly unusual circumstances, parents schedule family vacations during the summertime or during school recesses, such as those in December and April. Please be mindful for those who might be planning a vacation in June, snow days are added to the calendar in June. If your family is planning a vacation, please complete the family vacation form, available on the SMS website, and return it to the Main Office.

Please note the following regarding vacations:

1. Family vacation days are only excused if a student has under 9 absences, in accordance with state law.
2. If a student exceeds 9 absences while on vacation, the remainder of the absences will be marked unexcused. Similarly, if the school has not been notified, the absences will be marked unexcused. Please note that students are not permitted to make up work, for credit, when absences are unexcused. Students will receive a grade of zero for all work missed if the absences are unexcused.
3. Please note that it is the responsibility of the student to monitor the Google Classroom for each class and to make up work while they are away, or to coordinate with each teacher upon their return. Please note, teachers will not be responsible for providing assignments in advance.
4. Upon return from vacation, students will be allowed to make up work missed in accordance with the attendance and make up/missing work sections of this handbook, provided that the absences associated with the vacation are excused.

ASSEMBLIES

Throughout the year, assemblies may be presented to various classes. During assemblies, students are expected to give courteous attention to the program, thus allowing other students their right to enjoy the presentation. Inappropriate behavior may lead to disciplinary consequences and the suspension of assembly privileges throughout the year.

ATHLETICS

Schaghticoke Middle School offers a variety of interscholastic and intramural athletic opportunities. Intramural sports are recreational sports at SMS, while the interscholastic level involves tryouts, a greater level of commitment, and competition against other middle schools in the region.

SEASONAL ATHLETIC SELECTIONS

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cross Country (IS)	Basketball (IM, IS)	Baseball (IM, IS)
Field Hockey (IM, IS)	Volleyball (IM)	Flag Football (IM)
Flag Football (IM)		Frisbee (IM)
Soccer (IM, IS)		Softball (IM, IS)
		Track & Field (IM, IS)
Unified Sports	Unified Sports	Unified Sports

Key: IM = Intramural, IS=interscholastic

***Selections listed represent those that ran in the 2021/22 school year. Selections are subject to change.*

Interested in participating in one of our intramural or interscholastic athletic opportunities? Be sure to listen carefully to morning announcements for more information on season start dates. Parents, watch your email inboxes for updates from

SMS which will include appropriate information about our athletic programs. If you have questions or concerns about any of our athletic programs, please reach out to our athletics coordinator, Mr. Hibbard.

SPECTATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOR:

- Respect decisions made by contest and school officials;
- Refrain from taunting, booing, heckling, and the use of inappropriate language;
- Attendance at this contest is not a license to verbally assault others or to be generally offensive;
- No noisemakers;
- Respect athletes, coaches, officials, and fans;
- Obey all local and school regulations;
- Be a fan, not a fanatic.

Violations of these rules may result in removal from the event and exclusion from any further athletic events. Violations of these rules may also result in school disciplinary consequences.

BEHAVIOR

Your parents/guardians, our community, and the school district have worked together to provide you with a staff, building, and equipment to help prepare you for a future of success. We are committed to giving you the best education we can and know you will take special pride in keeping our school "First Class."

Through the year you will be expected to assume the responsibilities listed below:

1. Attend class;
2. Be in your assigned seat with all necessary materials when the bell rings;
3. Give every assignment your best effort;
4. Treat every student and staff member with courtesy;
5. Follow the specific rules in each class;
6. Help maintain the building and all school equipment and materials and keep these things in good condition;
7. Refrain from using inappropriate behavior and language on school grounds and on the school bus;
8. Refrain from activities that might prove injurious to you or others;
9. Comply with Board of Education expectations regarding student conduct, which are set forth in the 5000 Series of the [Board Policies](#), available on the New Milford Public Schools' website.

If the usual interventions between a teacher and a student fail to resolve a concern, the parent can expect to be contacted by the classroom teacher. The following are a series of procedures that may be taken to resolve a classroom situation.

- Conference with teacher;
- Call to parents/guardians from teacher;
- Request for guidance intervention;
- Assign/reassign detention;
- Referral to administration.

BOOKS & OTHER MATERIALS

Each student is responsible for maintaining and returning each textbook issued to him/her. All public property issued to or used by students is to be treated with care. Loss, damage or wear and tear beyond normal use due to misuse, neglect, or carelessness will result in a replacement charge. This applies to books, athletic equipment, laboratory equipment, locks, etc. To increase the life of the book, books should be covered. Damage to or loss of books or other materials is the student's financial responsibility. Certain student privileges may be withheld from students who fail to satisfy outstanding obligations. Withdrawal from school/transfer cannot be processed until all textbooks are returned.

BOOKBAGS

Book bags, side bags, backpacks and mini-bags are to be used as a means for transporting school related items to and from home. These bags should be of a size that will fit in a student's hall locker. Students will not be allowed to bring any of these bags from class to class. Within the school day, students are allowed to use string bags only. Minimal items should be kept in the string bag, as students have opportunities to obtain items from their locker.

BUILDING HOURS

Students may not enter the building before 7:15 a.m. Students who arrive at school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:25 a.m. should report to the cafeteria.

BULLETIN BOARDS

The various bulletin boards located throughout the school are intended only for approved school-related information. All flyers, posters, etc must be approved by administration before they can be posted.

BULLYING, HAZING, TEASING, TAUNTING, AND INITIATIONS

Everyone at SMS has a duty to behave responsibly and courteously toward others. Any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person's physical or emotional health will not be tolerated. This includes bullying, teasing, hazing, taunting, and initiations of any kind. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including suspension and expulsion. We hope that all members of our school community will send a message of responsibility, respect, and kindness to others.

BUS PASSES

Bus passes are not able to be issued by the school. If a bus pass is needed, please call the Central Office at (860)354-8726 ext. 219. Please note that bus passes will only be issued in emergency/extenuating circumstances.

CAFETERIA

New Milford's Food and Nutrition Services Department works hard to ensure that students are provided with the opportunity to have nutritious and delicious meals while at school. Breakfast and lunch are available for purchase each day. Breakfast is served from 7:15 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. each day. Please note, students wishing to have breakfast at school are still expected to be on time for class. Student lunch times are based on their individual class schedule. For lunch, students may choose the full hot lunch, salad bar, or a variety of individual items available. Lunch menus are available on the [Food & Nutrition Services website](#).

Please note the following expectations for the cafeteria:

1. Students are only allowed in the cafe during their scheduled lunch block. Otherwise, they should be in their assigned classroom.
2. Please enter the cafeteria from the hallway on the Gym/LMC side (by the stairs/ramp). Line up on the ramp and wait for staff to arrive.
3. Select your seat and put your bag on the table before going to get food.
4. Only students that are purchasing food should enter the food service area. Students are not allowed to eat cafeteria food until they have completed their purchase and are past the cash registers. Panhandling is strictly prohibited.
5. Students must remain seated in the cafeteria while eating;
6. At the conclusion of each lunch period, students are responsible for depositing their refuse in the receptacles provided.
7. Any departure from mature, adult behavior in the cafeteria infringes upon the rights of others and will not be tolerated.
8. Students who abuse the cafeteria privilege may be given disciplinary consequences.
9. No food or drink may be taken out of the cafeteria.
10. Please exit the cafeteria using the doors by the food service area.

New Milford's Food and Nutrition Services Department provides parents with a convenient, easy, and secure online prepayment service to deposit money into their children's school meal accounts at any time. This service also provides you with the ability to view the account balances through a web site called www.myschoolbucks.com. In addition, you can print out a copy of your children's eating history reports. The history report lists dates and times of all food purchased within the past thirty days. Parents may also place restrictions on accounts to limit the purchase of a la carte items.

When parents choose not to take advantage of the online pre-payment service, advance payments via cash or check are made to the cafeteria. Checks are payable to the School Lunch Activity Fund and should include your child's full name and PIN. Students may put money in their account anytime except when lunch is being served.

If your child qualifies for free or reduced priced meals, this information is noted in the system and the meal is processed just as it is for all other students without any special indication to the student. Applications for free or reduced priced meals will be sent home with students in the fall and are also available in the school office. If you are concerned about your child's food allergy, please notify the cafeteria with this information. If indicated, a warning will appear on the cashier's screen for a review of the items on your child's tray.

When purchasing a meal, students enter their person's six-digit personal identification number (PIN). A practice keypad can be found on the district homepage. Please feel free to contact the Food Services office at 860-354-3712 if you have any questions.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

A student whose home address changes within the Town of New Milford, or whose phone number has changed, should notify the main office immediately.

COMPUTER USE RULES

Computers are to be used for school-related activities only. Misuse will result in loss of privileges and other disciplinary measures. All users are expected to use the computers responsibly in accordance with the Network and Internet Access Policy. The following rules also apply to all users:

Computer Users May:

- Complete classwork and homework assignments;
- Go on-line to access Google, as well as websites, apps and programs as directed by their teacher.

Users May Not:

- Change any computer settings or render the system inoperable;
- Use another person's username or password;
- Download software, music, or other copyrighted material;
- Stream movies or videos;
- Install software;
- Access personal email, chat rooms, or instant messaging;
- Access or transmit obscene or inappropriate material;
- Access another person's computer files;
- Harass any individual;
- Play computer games;
- Violate any local, state, or federal statute;

Students needing technology help should put in a [help desk ticket](#).

NMPS uses Google to access the internet and to create and store student work. All uses are filtered and inappropriate passwords, searches, text, and documents are flagged. Administration may be notified of any references including but not limited to drugs, sex, racial comments, and profanity, along with searches to bypass the filter. Students may face disciplinary consequences including possible loss of privileges, suspension, or arrest. Police or other authorities may also be contacted. Refer to Board Policy #6141.321

DANCES

Social events in the form of dances and concerts are sponsored by various school groups and clubs throughout the year.

1. Dances are for currently enrolled Schaghticoke School students only. No guests are allowed. Students serving a suspension (ISS or OSS) on the day of the dance are not permitted to attend.

2. Students are not to be on school grounds more than 15 minutes before and following the dance. No one is to loiter on school grounds at any time.
3. Book bags and other packages or containers are not allowed at the dance, and if brought, must be turned over to the chaperones at the door.
4. Directives of staff members and chaperones are to be politely complied with.
5. All school rules are in effect, and anyone violating school or dance rules is subject to other disciplinary action, such as detention, suspension, etc.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

Maintaining discipline within the school is an essential component of ensuring a safe environment in which students can pursue their education and access the school's many extracurricular activities. Students and their parents are expected to learn and abide by the district's disciplinary policies and the school's behavioral expectations. A discussion of these policies and expectations are set forth in sections 3 & 4 of this handbook.

DUE PROCESS & OTHER CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

The right to "due process" simply means that, especially in disciplinary matters, the student is entitled both to know what misconduct he/she is accused of having engaged in and to tell his/her side of the story to the school administrator in charge. This right is primarily intended for serious disciplinary situations where suspension from school is a possibility,

Equally significant is the fact that students in public schools do not automatically possess all the constitutional rights of adults or of a citizen on the street. School officials have the duty to create and maintain an atmosphere in which learning can take place. In this effort, it is necessary for them to, at times, interrogate, monitor, and control students in a manner more burdensome than can be expected by a citizen on the street.

The courts have ruled that this is acceptable as long as school officials act in a reasonable and prudent manner.

EVENING EVENTS

Students **MUST** be accompanied by an adult when attending any evening event at Schaghticoke Middle School including plays and concerts. Students not with a parent will be asked to wait in the office until a parent arrives to pick him/her up or to accompany the student to the event.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips held during school time compliment the school's curriculum. They are available to all students except those who pose a safety risk to themselves and/or others or whose behavior is not in concert with SMS behavior expectations. As with all other school activities, students who are suspended, either in-school or out-of-school, or who have been expelled, will not be permitted to attend the field trip. The student in danger of not attending a proposed field trip and their parents will be notified. Students who have qualified for free or reduced lunches may also apply for field trip financial assistance. Field trip financial assistance is available on a first come, first served basis and may not be available for all field trips.

FIRE DRILLS & EVACUATIONS

Law requires monthly fire drills. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to vacate the building at the sound of the fire alarm. Directions for proper exit are posted in each room. Valuables should not be left behind when the classroom is vacated. In addition to monthly fire drills, drills for emergency response codes will also be conducted. Consult your classroom teacher for a more detailed explanation of these codes. In the event of an emergency situation in the school environment, all students, faculty, and staff are expected to follow instructions given by the administration, police department and/or fire department.

FOOD & DRINK

Students may not have food or beverages in classrooms or corridors. This includes bottled water. No containers of any type are allowed in the classrooms and/or corridors. All food and beverages are to be consumed in the cafeteria. Students may have drinks with written permission from an administrator or a nurse.

The New Milford School District's Wellness Policy strives to promote good nutrition as one of the key components to help students achieve and maintain good health. For more information, please visit www.newmilfordps.org and click on Food Service for our district's wellness initiative.

HEALTH OFFICE

The nurse is on duty during school hours. Except for extreme emergencies, when you need to see the nurse, report to class or study hall first and request a pass from your teacher.

Allergies

If your child has allergies to any substance, please contact the school nurse.

Immunizations

Grade 5-6 immunization requirements

- DTaP/Td/Tdap—at least 4 doses. The last dose must be given on or after 4th birthday. Students who start the series at age 7 or older only need a total of 3 doses.
- Polio—at least 3 doses. The last dose must be given on or after 4th birthday.
- MMR—2 doses separated by at least 28 days, 1 dose on or after the 1st birthday.
- HepB—3 doses, last dose on or after 24 weeks of age.
- Varicella—1st dose on or after the 1st birthday; or verification of disease the 1st birthday. • HepB—3 doses, last dose on or after 24 weeks of age.
- Varicella—1st dose on or after the 1st birthday; or verification of disease.

Grade 7 immunization requirements

- Tdap/Td—1 dose for students who have completed their primary DTaP series. Students who start the series at age 7 or older only need a total of 3 doses of tetanus-diphtheria containing vaccine, one of which must be Tdap
- Polio—At least 3 doses. The last dose must be given on or after 4th birthday
- MMR—2 doses separated by at least 28 days, 1st dose on or after the 1st birthday
- Meningococcal—1 dose
- HepB—3 doses, last dose on or after 24 weeks of age
- Varicella—2 doses separated by at least 3 months—1st dose on or after the 1st birthday; or verification of disease.

Medication

Connecticut law requires a physician's written order and parent/guardian's written authorization for a nurse to administer medicinal preparations in school. If at all possible, medications should be given at home and not during school hours. If a student requires the administration of medication during school hours, the New Milford Board of Education Policy on administration of medication is by school nurse and teachers during school hours is as follows:

1. The school must receive the written consent of the parent/guardian to administer the medication and a written order of the prescribing doctor;
2. The bottle must be labeled with the name of the student, name of the doctor, name of the medication, the date it is ordered, and the directions;
3. The medication must be brought to school by a parent or responsible adult and taken home by a parent or responsible adult. At the end of the school year, the nurse will dispose of any remaining medication NOT brought home, after one week.
4. The proper consent and order forms are available in the nurse's office or a physician's office. If parents/guardians take their child(ren) to their doctor, take the doctor's form and have it filled out. Cooperation in this program will be a great help in ensuring that children receive the medical assistance they need during the school hours.
5. Neither the New Milford Board of Education nor any of its personnel, including but not limited to school nurses, is responsible for ensuring that the medication, or its recommended dosage, prescribed by a physician or other medical professional and/or provided by the parents or guardians, is appropriate for the student.

INSURANCE

Accident insurance is available for purchase by each student. Parents/guardians are encouraged to enroll their child in this program if they do not have medical or accident insurance, since most accidents during the school day are not covered by Board of Education school insurance.

LAPTOPS

All students are provided a school issued Chromebook for their use while a student at SMS along with a carrying case, mouse and charging cord. It is the student's responsibility to keep these in good working order. If a problem arises the student should put in a [help desk ticket](#). Upon leaving the New Milford Public Schools this Chromebook is one of the materials that need to be returned. Students are required to read and sign a usage policy outlining the guidelines and restrictions to be followed for appropriate use of the computers.

LASER POINTERS

In accordance with state law, possession of laser pointers by minors on school grounds or other public places is prohibited unless being used under the direction of a teacher. Shining, pointing, or focusing a laser pointer directly or indirectly at or on anyone for the purpose of harassing, annoying, or causing a person to fear injury is prohibited. Infractions are punishable by fines set by a judge of the Superior Court.

LAVATORY USE (VIOLATIONS OF)

Lavatory facilities are provided at SMS for intended bathroom uses only. Students are expected to limit their time in a lavatory facility to the time needed for intended use only. All school rules and Board of Education policies are applicable in the lavatory.

Additionally, students may not:

1. Loiter in a lavatory;
2. Act as a "lookout" who warns other students of the arrival of a staff member into the lavatory;
3. Have more than one person in a stall at a time;

The Administration reserves the right to restrict lavatory use privileges of students who abuse their lavatory privileges.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The library media center is open from 7:35 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. for student use. A student must have a pass to be admitted to the library media center. In order to provide a quiet atmosphere for study, unnecessary talking is discouraged. Students who show a lack of self-control will lose their center privileges. Passes given for a student to complete a class assignment are to be given by the classroom teacher assigning the work. The pass will entitle the student to remain in the library media center for the entire period.

LOCKERS & LOCKS

A locker, in good operating condition, will be issued to each student during the first few days of school. Lockers are made available for students to be able to store backpacks, coats, etc during the school day. The lockers are school property and are on loan to the student. The administration will open locked lockers if it has reason to believe the locker may contain items which are illegal and/or a threat to the safety and wellbeing of the school community, or are otherwise being used for purposes that would constitute a violation of the law or of Board policies. The contents of the locker are the responsibility of the person to whom the locker is issued. Locker clean outs are held periodically throughout the school year.

Students must use a school issued lock on their locker. If a lock that was not issued by the school is found on a locker, the lock will be cut off the locker and discarded. The charge for a lost lock is \$8.00. Locks should be kept locked at all times. Students are not to share lockers or give out their combinations to other people. Additionally, students should not access or attempt to access a locker other than the one assigned to them. If a locker is malfunctioning, students should report the concern to their homeroom teacher.

LOST & FOUND/PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are advised not to bring expensive watches, jewelry, electronics, and other personal items to school. Any items brought to school are a student's personal responsibility. The school does not take responsibility if personal property is

lost or stolen. When students do not have them in their personal possession, the items should be locked in their regular or gym locker. A lost and found box will be located in the cafeteria for all lost items, except books which will be sent to the issuing teachers. The school is not responsible for any property lost, including money, at school. Allegations of theft will be handled by the administration.

PASSES

Students are required to have a pass any time they are in the corridor after 7:35 a.m., except when passing between classes. Students must report to their normally scheduled class before using a pass to any other place in the building. Students who abuse pass privileges may be placed on a restricted pass by administration.

PERSONAL PRIVACY

Any type of recording device (audio and/or visual) is strictly prohibited in school, especially in bathrooms and physical education locker rooms. Title IX protects any person from sex-based discrimination, regardless of their real or perceived sex, gender identity, and/or gender expression. Female, male, and gender non-conforming students, faculty, and staff are protected from any sex-based discrimination, harassment or violence.

RECORD KEEPING PROCEDURES

Student academic progress will be updated and recorded at regular intervals in the Parent Portal. No formal notice of these updates will be provided. Report cards will no longer be mailed home. State Assessment scores will be reported to students and parents/guardians through the mail in the fall following the test date.

RESIDENCE

Children who reside outside of the school district but whose parent or parents live in New Milford may not attend New Milford Schools, except with special permission of the Board of Education; however, a student may reside with an adult resident of New Milford if this is a permanent arrangement and has the consent of the parent. Questions of residence are certified through the office of the Assistant Superintendent of Schools (860-354-3235).

SCHOOL COUNSELING & OTHER RELATED SERVICES

Each student at SMS has a School Counselor assigned to them, typically based on their grade level/team. Parents/guardians may schedule a conference with their child's school counselor during or after the school day. The school and counseling services are structured to assist students in understanding themselves and to help them make the best use of the school's educational resources. Counselors are not licensed to offer therapeutic counseling. The school counselors are available to students through referrals made by the student, parent, teacher, or administration.

In addition to our School Counselors, SMS is serviced by school psychologists and social workers. These staff members are responsible for psychoeducational evaluations, consulting with staff and parents concerning a student's academic and emotional needs, providing school based counseling for students, and facilitating the implementation of the student's educational program. They will also help parents procure the necessary outside resources they may need.

SILENT READING/TAKE TIME TO READ

New Milford Public Schools (NMPS) is committed to developing a culture of competent readers. Reading, like other skills, needs to be practiced regularly. Based on evidence which suggests that volume of reading is linked to attaining higher-order literacy proficiencies (Allington, 2012; Brozo et al, 2008, Cipelewski & Stanovich, 1992). Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding (1988) researched the relationship between the amount of reading done and reading achievement. They found that the amount of time reading was the best predictor of reading achievement, including a child's growth as a reader from the second to the fifth grade. (Calkins, Research Base Underlying the Teachers College Reading and Writing Workshop Approach to Literacy Instruction).

Being committed to promoting a culture of readers, NMPS subscribes to the following parameters:

Grade	Reading Time
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K	1 Picture Book Read Aloud or Read Independently
1	10-15 minutes
2	20 minutes nightly
3	20 minutes nightly
4	30 minutes nightly
5	30 minutes nightly
6-12	45 minutes or more nightly

As a regular part of the school schedule, time will be set aside for students and staff to practice reading. It is expected that all students will be prepared for this time with something to read. Students that need help accessing a book at their just right reading level or finding a new book of interest are encouraged to talk to a teacher or visit the LMC.

SNOW DAYS

Inclement weather will occasionally result in the closing of school or early dismissal or, in less severe situations, a delayed opening. Information about school delays and closings will be announced via School Messenger and the NMPS website.

SKATEBOARD

Possession and/or use of a skateboard is not allowed on campus at Schaghticoke Middle School, at any time. Violations may result in disciplinary consequences.

STAYING AFTER SCHOOL

Students are permitted to stay after school for athletics, academic help, clubs and other activities. Students must be with a teacher, coach, or other adult at all times while staying after school. Students must have written permission from a parent/guardian to stay after school. This written permission should be given directly to the teacher/coach/other adult that the child will be staying with. Please note, there is no general supervision after school. As such, all students are expected to leave at dismissal unless they have made previous arrangements with an adult to stay after school.

STUDENT RECORDS/CONFIDENTIALITY

Either the parents or legal guardians of a minor student are entitled to knowledge of and access to all educational, medical, or similar school records maintained in their child's cumulative folder, within a reasonable time after request. Parents and guardians are not entitled to information about their children which is considered privileged, in other words, confidential communication between teacher or nurse and student.

With a few exceptions, release of student information or transfer of records may take place only with the written consent of the parents or legal guardians. Information regarding federal, state, and local policies regarding student records is available from school administrators. Parents, legal guardians, and 18-year-old students may see the contents of student permanent record folders and special education folders. The lawful release of records requires a written request, however. A parent/guardian who does not have custody of a student is allowed access to student records, unless a court order specifically disallows that right.

STUDY HALLS

The following expectations are in place for study halls:

1. Students will study quietly unless given permission by the teacher to study with another student;
2. Students may leave study hall classes only with permission of the teacher who will give them a signed pass and have them sign out on a sign-out sheet;
3. Students will bring all necessary study materials to the study hall class.
4. Students will understand and meet any other expectations as outlined by the teacher in charge.

TELEPHONES

The office phone is for emergencies only. If a student needs to use the phone they should come to the office and ask permission. They may be asked to give the reason for their call before using the main office phone. Students are not to use their personal phones to call home for parent pick up during the school day. Phones are to be kept in students' lockers. Per the BOE BYOD policy: students will only be allowed to use their laptops, tablets, cell phones or other electronic devices for educational purposes at school. Checking personal email, socializing via texts or instant messages, or otherwise engaging in personal pursuits is prohibited during the instructional day.

TOOLS

Students may not bring to school or be in possession of mechanical, carpentry, or hand tools such as screwdrivers, hammers, wrenches, etc.

TRESPASSING

School buildings and grounds are under the jurisdiction of the New Milford Board of Education. The unauthorized presence of anyone is a matter for police action. In particular, students or others found in the building apart from normal school hours can expect to be referred to the police.

VAPING

Vaping of any type is prohibited on school grounds. The possession of such products and/or devices is illegal and will result in disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Any vape product or paraphernalia (ie: battery or charger) will be confiscated and disposed of.

VIDEO RECORDING

There are two types of video security in the school district: on buses and in the public areas of the school building. This video recording is for the purposes of safety and security. The archives are erased approximately every thirty (30) days, unless a clip needs to be kept as evidence in an active case. Due to privacy laws, videos will not be shared with students or parents/guardians.

VISITORS

All visitors must be buzzed into the office and present their license for identification. A badge will be printed for them and this badge must be visible during their stay.

WHO TO CONTACT IF YOU NEED HELP

From time to time students and families may have questions or concerns about their child's experience at SMS. Please refer to the following information to help you direct your inquiry to the appropriate person:

- For attendance related concerns, please call the Main Office at (860)354-2204 ext. 303.
- For health related concerns, please call the Nurse's Office at (860)354-2204 ext.
- For bus passes, please call Central Office at (860)354-8726 ext. 219. For all other transportation related concerns, please call the Main Office at (860)354-2204.
- Questions or concerns that pertain to a particular class should be directed to the classroom teacher. If after speaking with a teacher, you feel you need additional assistance, please utilize the following resources: Case Manager (Special Education/504 students), School Counselor, Head Teacher for the department, Assistant Principal/Supervisor of Special Education, Principal.

WHO'S WHO AT SMS?

School Counselors

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team(s)</u>	<u>Phone Ext.</u>	<u>Email</u>
Jill Strub	6 Red, 6 White	310	strubj@newmilfordps.org
Beth Heller	6 Blue	181	hellerb@newmilfordps.org
Shannon Thomas	7 White, 7 Blue	308	thomass@newmilfordps.org
Cathy Shea	8 White 8 Blue	309	sheac@newmilfordps.org

Lauren D'Amico 7 Red, 8 Red 314 damicol@newmilfordps.org

Department Heads

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Phone Extension</u>	<u>Email</u>
Gina Bernard	ELA	203	bernardg@newmilfordps.org
Kevin Deitz	Mathematics**	153	deitzk@newmilfordps.org
Rob Hibbard	Unified Arts	119	hibbardr@newmilfordps.org
Ashley Kivela	Social Studies	222	kivelaas@newmilfordps.org
Theresa McGuinness	Mathematics**	151	mcguinnessst@newmilfordps.org
Jennifer Saraiva	World Languages	145	saraivaj@newmilfordps.org
Susan Stoughton	Science	245	stoughtons@newmilfordps.org
Jillian Slater	Special Education	263	slaterj@newmilfordps.org

Team Leaders

<u>Name</u>	<u>Team(s)</u>	<u>Phone Ext.</u>	<u>Email</u>
Jennifer Vincent	6 Red	217	vincentj@newmilfordps.org
Daniel Savo	6 White	207	savod@newmilfordps.org
Jean Ficke	6 Blue	206	fickej@newmilfordps.org
Katelyn Oviatt	7 Red	224	oviattk@newmilfordps.org
Kaitlyn Kakadeles	7 White	220	kakadelesk@newmilfordps.org
Jim Martin	7 Blue	246	martinj@newmilfordps.org
Rachel Gall	8 Red	248	gallr@newmilfordps.org
Robyn Hicks	8 White	147	hicksr@newmilfordps.org
Heather Morin	8 Blue	125	morinh@newmilfordps.org

Administration

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Phone Ext.</u>	<u>Email</u>
Frank Jawidzik	Assistant Principal (Last Names A-L)	303	jawidzikf@newmilfordps.org
Michael Boucher	Assistant Principal (Last Names M-Z)	303	boucherm@newmilfordps.org
Shannon Surreira	Assistant Principal	303	surreiras@newmilfordps.org
Tracy-Ann Menzies	Supervisor, Special Education	305	menziest@newmilfordps.org
Linda Scoralick	Principal	302	scoralickl@newmilfordps.org

SECTION 2: ACADEMICS

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

The following course requirements are in place for students at SMS.

Grade 6 Students

ELA - Reading	ELA - Writing	Mathematics
Social Studies	Science	Art
Music (Band, Chorus, Orchestra, General Music)	Physical Education	Health
Technology/Computer Education	Developmental Guidance (push in)	

Grade 7 Students

ELA	Mathematics	Social Studies
Science	Reading Comprehension or World Language (Spanish/French)	Art
Music	Project Lead the Way	Physical Education
Health	Technology/Computer Education	Developmental Guidance (push in)

Grade 8 Students

ELA	Mathematics	Social Studies
Science	Reading Comprehension or World Language (Spanish/French)	Art
Music	Project Lead the Way	Physical Education
Health	Technology/Computer Education	Developmental Guidance (push in)

Musical Opportunities

Chorus - 2 days per 6-day cycle and one sectional/full year. Or, sometimes 1 day in a 5-day rotation. Band - 2 days per 6-day cycle and one sectional/full year

Orchestra - 2 days per 6-day cycle and one sectional/full year

Jazz Band - before school *

Voices - before or after school *

**By audition*

Advanced Mathematics

A variety of advanced courses in mathematics are offered at SMS. Teacher recommendation for these courses will be done based on criteria to be published at a later date. Any student interested in taking advanced courses in mathematics is encouraged to give their best effort on all testing, assignments, and activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GRADE 9

Eighth graders who hope to be recommended for placement into honors level courses at New Milford High School need to work very hard from the beginning of eighth grade. The following are the various levels of courses offered at New Milford High School:

Level Focus

College Prep Academic courses present an in depth study of subject matter and content. Students in this level are expected to demonstrate strong basic skills in the individual subject matter. Academic courses meet the academic requirements for applying to college.

Honors courses are for students who display extremely strong academic skills, high motivation, and an ability to work with abstract concepts independently. Honors courses prepare students for highly selective colleges.

The placement of students into a particular level of a course depends on many factors. The following procedures are used by SMS teachers when recommending students for ninth grade classes:

1. The teacher of the student recommends placement into a particular level of achievement. Requirements for research and homework vary according to the level of instruction after considering:
 - a. the student's achievement;
 - b. standardized test results;
 - c. record of having completed homework in a timely and thorough manner;
2. The student's school counselor then assists with teacher recommendations. The entire scheduling process is a cooperative effort between parent, student, teacher, and counselor. Parents/guardians are encouraged to work closely with the student, the teachers, and the counselor to ensure placement in the most appropriate level of instruction.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Cheating violates the philosophy and goals of Schaghticoke Middle School. It also can serve as a basis for suspension or expulsion under Board Policy 5114. The following are some examples of cheating:

- Copying answers from others;
- Dishonestly obtaining answers or other information during tests and quizzes;
- Dishonestly receiving information about tests or quizzes before they are given;
- Stealing tests or quizzes;
- Submitting another's work or ideas as your own (plagiarism);
- Turning in the same work for more than one class without permission;
- Obtaining essays, reports, or term papers from the Internet and turning them in as your own work; ▪ Using either human or electronic translation to translate assignments in World Language class; ▪ Giving another student your work to copy and submit as his/her own;
- Accepting money to do the work for another student;
- Taking pictures of tests or other student assessments;
- Texting test information or answers to others;

Avoid plagiarism by citing sources for the information included in your work that is not your original oral, written, or visual composition. There are many websites that show how to write a citation that you can use. A citation usually includes the author(s), where the information came from, and when it was composed. Check with your teacher for a citation-preferred style. If a teacher suspects plagiarism the teacher will first discuss concerns with the student. If the teacher then determines that dishonesty has taken place, a disciplinary referral will be submitted to the Student's Administrator. If a student wishes to appeal a referral, they should contact their administrator.

COURSE CHANGES

As a matter of practice, no changes will be made to a student's schedule except for the following reasons:

- clear cut computer entry error
- completion of Summer School course

- level changes
- Planning and Placement Team meeting recommendation

Changes to a student's schedule will not be made for the following reasons:

- teacher change request
- student changed their mind about taking the course

EXAMS

Mid-year and final exams may be given in grades 7 and 8 at the discretion of the subject area teacher. This exam may be in the form of a test, project, or some other performance assessment. Grade 6 does not hold formal mid-year and final examinations.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Health education includes the discussion of AIDS and is included in the Human Growth and Development/Sexuality component of the health curriculum. This component will be introduced in the last three to four weeks of the semester. Students will explore the causes, symptoms, routes of transmission, treatment, methods of testing, and the social issues relating to AIDS and the community. Parents who wish their child to be excluded from this instruction should refer to Appendix A, which lists Board of Education policies.

The New Milford Public Schools 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Health Curriculum features different units of study. Two of these areas of study are Sexual Assault and Abuse Prevention and Awareness. State law allows parents the opportunity to notify school authorities in writing in the event you wish your child to be excluded from either or both of these programs. Once written notification has been received, your child will be given an alternative instruction program during this unit of study. No academic sanction will be levied against any student who is provided with this alternative. Parents have the opportunity to come to school and meet with our Health and P.E. staff to review what will be taught before making a decision to opt-out. For more details on units being taught or if you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's health teacher via email.

HOMEBOUND TUTORING

Students who are absent for an extended period of time because of illness may request home instruction upon completion and acceptance of the medical questionnaire. All parent requests for home instruction will be directed to the student's Administrator and will be provided for medical reasons that meet the State and Federal mandates for such services. Once instruction has been approved, a teacher will report for a period of two hours per subject each week. All instruction will take place at the public library. Notwithstanding the foregoing, circumstances may sometimes require that instruction be provided remotely or virtually, which will be at the discretion of the school administration. If it is determined that instruction needs to take place in the home, an adult person must be present in the home during the instruction period. Any questions or problems should be directed to administration.

HOMEROOM - WIN/ADVISORY/3TR

During each student's homeroom, all students will participate in various learning experiences. This period of time is designed to provide an opportunity for students to access their teachers for extra help, enrichment, or other experience. Periodically throughout the year, students will be engaged in advisory activities linked to Social Emotional Learning. At times, the school/students will be notified to hold our Take Time to Read (3TR) initiative during this time. The purpose and goal of 3TR is to stress and encourage reading. During this period, students will read material of their choosing or a material encouraged by their teacher. Both Advisory and 3TR are also part of the NMHS schedule.

HOMEWORK

Homework assists with the development of a responsible, independent learner. For 6th grade, the type of homework and the length of the assignment will be reflective of the child's age and attention span. As students' progress to eighth grade, the amount and type of work will vary. Most students in grade 7 can expect regular daily assignments that may take up to 80 minutes to complete. The homework time for students in grade 8 may increase to 90 minutes per night. Some students

may spend more time than others on given assignments. If a student spends more than 30 minutes on any assignment, the parent should notify the teacher of this concern.

HONOR ROLL

Eligibility for Honor Rolls:

To recognize outstanding scholastic achievement, motivate students to do well in their studies, and teach students the importance of meeting all their responsibilities, the Board of Education hereby establishes the following categories of honors and the criteria for eligibility for said honors.

Highest Honors:	All grades 90 or better in all subjects.
High Honors:	An average of 90 or better in all subjects. No grade below 70.
Honors:	An average of 85 or better in all subjects. No grade below 70.

In order to be eligible for the honor roll, a student must be taking four classes.

MAKE-UP WORK

Generally, students have two (2) class periods for each day of absence to complete make up work. If the work is not made up at the end of the marking period, the existing grade will be registered on the report card. If the student is being allowed a grace period to get caught up, the grade on the report card will be accompanied by this comment, "This grade reflects incomplete work that must be completed within ten (10) school days after the close of the marking period." If the work is made up, the teacher will alter the grade. If not, the grade remains as published on the report card.

Make-up Work Missed Due to Approved Absence/Tardy

1. Students may make up work for excused absences. Students will have two class days for each day absent in which to complete make-up work, unless determined otherwise by mutual agreement of the teacher and the student.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain assignments from the teacher or classmates for absences of up to three (3) days. In the event of long-term excused absence from four (4) days up to three (3) weeks, a parent/guardian may request in writing that the school counselor send assignments home.

PARENT PORTAL

The New Milford Public School District is continuing its efforts to communicate with parents and guardians of students. Powerschool, our student information system, allows secure access to parents through the Parent Portal. Parent Portal will allow parents and guardians to create a single parent account that will give access to all their children in the district. This web-based system will allow you to stay informed of your child's grades and attendance via the Internet. Find out what is going on at your child's school anytime, anywhere! With the parent portal, you can see your child's class assignments, email teachers, view grades, and access school bulletins.

Since our school district has transitioned over to a new Student Information System, more information will be shared regarding access to the new Portal.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Proper footwear and athletic attire are required for students in the physical education classes and sports programs. Students will change out of school clothes and into proper athletic attire. To provide a safe learning environment, each student is required to have proper footwear and all jewelry including earrings be removed. In addition, no gum or candy is allowed during physical education class. Due to the physical nature of class, jewelry of any kind is not allowed during class participation.

Locks will be issued for use in the locker rooms. Each student is provided with an individual locker for gymnasium sneakers and clothing as well as a large clothes storage locker for use during physical education classes. Students are to keep lockers locked for protection of personal property during classes. The school cannot be held responsible for items lost or stolen. Students will be charged \$5 for lost gym locks.

Physical Education Excuse Notes

Physical Education is mandated by Connecticut State Law. It is a subject in which the grade is based on in-class participation. When a child cannot participate in a day's activity, he/she is missing valuable class time. A statement from a certified physician is required for exemption from physical education classes. After a reasonable number of written excuses (2) from the nurse or from home, a child is required to make up the class time missed for that marking period. For every class beyond three that is not made up, the student's grade for that marking period will be reduced by five (5) points. Participating in structured after school classes will meet the make-up requirement.

SECTION 3: DISTRICT POLICIES

DISTRICT POLICIES

The New Milford Board of Education has promulgated policies pertaining to the New Milford Public Schools. The complete set of these Board Policies are available for review on the New Milford Public Schools' website at <http://www.newmilfordps.org/?DivisionID=16980&DepartmentID=18009>. The 5000 Series of these Policies enumerate and discuss the Board's expectations regarding student conduct. It is the obligation of both students and their parents or guardians to be aware of these policies, particularly as they pertain to student matters. Many, if not most, of these policies are authorized by or reflect either federal or Connecticut laws that are applicable to school districts and students. Sometimes, the Board Policies will change during – or between – school years, depending upon changes in the law or upon circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and it is therefore incumbent upon students and their parents or guardians to remain aware of any such changes.

What follows is a list of some Policies that are applicable to students. This is a *non-exclusive* list, and the fact that some Policies are not replicated or otherwise specifically referenced in this handbook does not mean that they do not exist, or that they can be ignored or that they will not be applied to students.

BULLYING, HAZING, TEASING, TAUNTING, AND INITIATIONS (#5131.911 & #5114)

Everyone has a duty to behave responsibly and courteously toward others. Any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person's physical or emotional health will not be tolerated. This includes bullying, teasing, hazing, taunting, and initiations of any kind. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including suspension and expulsion. Students who are victims or witnesses to any type of bullying should immediately report the incident to any SMS staff member. That person will alert the appropriate personnel. Please see Board Policies 5131.911 (Safe School Climate Plan/Bullying) and 5114 (Removal/Suspension/Expulsion) for further information.

DEFINITIONS

- A. "Bullying" means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive, which (A) causes physical or emotional harm to an individual, (B) places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or (C) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school. Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.
- B. "Cyberbullying" means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO POLICY (#5131.6)

The Board of Education is committed to maintaining a drug and alcohol free environment for the students in the school district. It is the policy of the Board of Education to take positive action through instruction, counseling, parental involvement, medical referral and law enforcement referral, as appropriate, in handling incidents involving the possession, distribution, sale or use of drugs, alcohol and other substances that affect behavior.

In keeping with this policy, the use, possession, sale, or distribution of drugs, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia or alcoholic beverages is prohibited on school premises or at any school sponsored activity. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary measures including suspension and expulsion. In addition, the student's parents will be contacted and referrals will be made to the appropriate treatment agency and/or law enforcement agency. Students should also be aware that they are subject to mandatory expulsion proceedings if they engage in the sale or distribution of a controlled substance regardless of whether such conduct occurred on or off school grounds. Finally, students are informed that the school administration is authorized to employ the use of both "passive" and/or active alcohol detection

devices.

The personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law. Students are on notice that school properties, including lockers and desks, may be searched when there is reasonable grounds to suspect that the search will produce evidence that the students has violated school rules.

Students will be notified annually of the requirements of this policy and potential disciplinary sanctions through the student handbook or other appropriate means of notification.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES (#5131.81)

Use of Beepers - Paging Devices/Cellular Telephones and Laser Pointers

Students shall not use cellular telephones during the instructional day except as permitted by the school district's "Bring Your Own Device" ("B.Y.O.D.") guidelines.

Students shall not possess or use a laser pointer, unless under teacher supervision for instructional purposes, while on school property, on school transportation or while attending a school sponsored activity on or of school property.

The School Principal may grant written permission for possession and use of a remotely activated paging device by a student if the student or his parent or guardian establishes to the satisfaction of the Principal that a reasonable basis exists for the possession and use of the device.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to prohibit a student with a disability from possessing and using a paging device or cellular telephone in a manner consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes: § 10-233j, § 53-206e

HARASSMENT IN THE SCHOOLS (#5145.5)

Notice to All Students

Discrimination is against the law.

Sexual, racial, and other unlawful harassment is against the law.

Everyone in the New Milford Public Schools has a right to feel respected and safe. Consequently, we want you to know about our policies to prevent unlawful harassment and other forms of discrimination.

The New Milford Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation, in any of its programs, activities and employment practices and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Board to maintain a working and learning environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, alienage, or any other basis prohibited by law.

A harasser may be a student, school employee, or any other person involved in or present for school-sponsored events or programs.

Harassment may include the following when based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or alienage:

1. Name calling, jokes, or rumors;
2. Pulling on clothing;
3. Graffiti;
4. Notes or cartoons;

5. Unwelcome touching of a person or clothing;
6. Offensive or graphic posters or book covers;
7. Any words, images or actions that make you feel uncomfortable, embarrass you, hurt your feelings or make you feel bad.

If any words, images or actions make you feel uncomfortable or fearful, you need to tell a guidance counselor, the Principal, Assistant Principal, or the district's Title IX Coordinator. You may also make a written report.

Your right to privacy will be protected as much as possible.

We take seriously all reports of harassment or violence and will take all appropriate actions based on your report. The school district will also take action if anyone tries to intimidate you because you have reported harassment. This is a brief summary of the district's policies on non-discrimination and unlawful harassment. Complete policies (Nos. 5000, 5145.5) are available at the Board of Education offices.

Students who harass other students or school employees may be subject to discipline as severe as expulsion from school or up to one calendar year.

For more information or to file a complaint of discrimination or unlawful harassment, contact the school district's Title IX Coordinator:

Office of the Assistant Superintendent
50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776
(860) 354-3235

NO SMOKING POLICY (#1331)

Smoking

The Board of Education is convinced, on the basis of substantial scientific and medical evidence, that smoking poses a serious hazard to the health of smokers and non-smokers alike. In addition, the Board believes that a school system, as an institution committed to the positive growth and development of young people that it serves.

For the purpose of this policy, the term "smoking" includes the use of vapor products and electronic devices that simulate smoking by delivering nicotine, cannabis or other substances by the inhalation of a vapor as well as the lighting or carrying of a lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe or similar device regardless of the content of the cigarette, cigar, pipe or similar device.

Students

There shall be no smoking or any other unauthorized use of tobacco and/or cannabis by students in any school building or school vehicle at any time, or on any school grounds or at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of designated school personnel, such as when the student is at any school function, extracurricular event, field trip, or school related activity such as a work-study program.

An ongoing program of student support and counseling will be offered to provide support for students who wish to break the smoking habit.

Staff and Public

It is the policy of the Board of Education, consistent with Connecticut General Statutes, to prohibit smoking both within school buildings or otherwise on school grounds at all times. Breaks by employees to smoke or use tobacco products are considered recreational activities. If an employee takes a break from work to smoke or use tobacco products or leaves school grounds at any time for any reason other than district business, including to smoke or use tobacco products, he/she will not be considered to be acting within the normal course and scope of Employment.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS (#5141.3)

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of periodic health assessments according to state health regulations.

To determine the health status of students, facilitate the removal of barriers to learning and find whether some special adaptation of the school program may be necessary, the Board of Education requires that students have health assessments.

The Board of Education adheres to those state laws and regulations that pertain to school immunizations and health assessments. It is the policy of the Board of Education to ensure that all enrolled students are adequately immunized against communicable diseases. The Board may deny continued attendance in school to any student who fails to obtain the health assessments required under Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-206.

Parents wishing their children exempted or excused from health assessments must request such exemption to the Superintendent of Schools in writing. This request must be signed by the parent/guardian. Students may be exempt from immunization requirements only in accordance with state law. In order to be eligible for an exemption on religious grounds, a student must, on or before April 28, 2021, (1) be enrolled in school in Grades K-12 and (2) must have submitted a valid religious exemption before that date. Exemption statements presented for the first time on or after April 28, 2021, are not legally valid bases for excusal from statutory immunization requirements on religious grounds.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that each student enrolled has been adequately immunized and has fulfilled the required health assessments. The school nurse shall check and document immunizations and health assessments on all students enrolling in school and to report the status to the school principal. The school nurse shall also contact parents or guardians to make them aware if immunizations and/or health assessments are insufficient or not up-to date. The school nurse will maintain in good order the immunization and health assessment records of each student enrolled.

No record of any student's medical assessment may be open to the public.

(cf. 5111 - Admission)

(cf. 5141.31 - Physical Examinations for School Programs)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-204a Required immunizations. Temporary waiver

10-204c Immunity from liability

10-205 Appointment of school medical advisers

10-206 Health assessments

10-206a Free health assessments

10-207 Duties of Medical Advisors

10-208 Exemption from examination or treatment

10-208a Physical activity of student restricted; Board to honor notice

10-209 Records not to be public. Provision of reports to schools.

10-212 School nurses and nurse practitioners.

10-214 Vision, audiometric and postural screenings. When required.

Notification of parents re defects; record of results.

STUDENT SEARCH AND SEIZURE (#5145.12(a))

The school administration is authorized to search any student locker or desk, and any student automobile located on school premises, for weapons, contraband or the fruits of a crime when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated the law or school rules.

No Expectation of Privacy in Use of School Property

Desks, lockers and other such property owned by the Board of Education are provided for use by students solely to support the educational experience. Although students are given use of these items, the Board retains access and control of all school property and may inspect the interior condition of desks and lockers for proper maintenance, health, safety and other administrative purposes. Inspections of school property may be accomplished with or without advance notice to students. Students should have no expectation of privacy in the use of desks, lockers and other similar school property. School officials may not use periodic inspections of school property as a pretense to search an individual student's locker or desk.

When and How School Officials May Conduct Searches

The school administration also is authorized to search a student's person where there exist reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating the law or school rules. The search of a student's person includes a search of a student's clothing and personal effects. Under no circumstances shall school district personnel conduct a "strip" search of a student. In the event that a student is reasonably suspected of concealing evidence of criminal activity that can be obtained only by removal of clothing and the student refuses to deliver such evidence, the assistance of the police shall be obtained.

Any search of a student's desk or locker or of a student's person shall be reasonably related in scope to the circumstances that justified the search in the first place. The scope of the search is reasonable when the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. A search of a student's person shall be conducted by a person of the same sex as the student and in the presence of a witness of the same sex of the student.

1. Only the Principal or designee shall be responsible for determining whether or not a search shall be conducted of a student's person or personal property. The Principal should consider involving the appropriate law enforcement officials.
2. When deemed appropriate, the Principal should consider the proper involvement of the lawful custodian of the student.
3. A second staff member shall be present during a search of either a student or a student's personal property.
4. The seizure or confiscation of items located in property in a student's immediate possession and/or on a student's person shall be accomplished in the following manner:
 - a. The seizure shall be witnessed by the student and a second staff member.
 - b. The search shall be conducted as discreetly as possible and in private.
 - c. Each and every item seized must be identified and not commingled with other items previously or subsequently seized.
 - d. The Principal shall prepare a summary report identifying the item(s) confiscated. The report should include the facts upon which reasonable suspicion was based, where the search occurred, the reason for the seizure, who was present, time, and the disposition of item(s).
 - e. A copy of the summary report shall be given to the student and/or lawful custodian(s) of the student.

Vehicle Searches on School Grounds

Vehicles brought on school grounds by students are subject to the same criteria for searches as students' personal belongings. Refusal by a student, parent or guardian, or owner of the vehicle to allow access to a motor vehicle on school premises at the time of a request to search the motor vehicle will be cause for termination of the privilege of bringing a motor vehicle onto school premises.

Seizure of Property Belonging to Student

School personnel may temporarily take control of property belonging to a student (including items such as a cell phone or other electronic device) when the student's use or possession of such property violates school rules or is otherwise disruptive of the educational process. Items taken from students should be made available for return to the student or the student's parent or legal guardian as soon as feasible or upon the conclusion of disciplinary proceedings associated with the item(s). Any illegal substance, weapon, item that may not be legally possessed by a student or other "fruit of a crime" that is confiscated from a student or discovered in an inspection of school property or search may be turned over to law enforcement officials.

Notice

Students shall be notified annually of this policy by publication in student handbooks and in any other manner that the Superintendent of Schools may deem effective.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules

54-33n, Search of School Lockers and Property

Case Law

New Jersey v. T.L.O., 469 US 325; 105 S.Ct.733 (1985)

afford Unified Sch. Dist. # 1 v. Redding, 129 S. Ct. 2633 (2009)

TITLE IX POLICY & DISCRIMINATION (#5145.7)

The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs and activities that it operates. This requirement not to discriminate in the District's education programs and activities extends to admission (as applicable) and employment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated among New Milford Public Schools' students. It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of sexual harassment is forbidden whether by students, supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, individuals under contract, or volunteers subject to the control of the Board. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees, to fellow students, and to the public. A student found to be a responsible party for sexual harassment in violation of Title IX may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. A finding that a student is not a responsible party for conduct that violates Title IX does not prevent discipline of the student if the conduct violates another Board policy or another provision of the student code of conduct. Student conduct that is not sexual harassment as defined under the Title IX regulations may still be found to be sexual harassment under Connecticut state law as set forth in Policy 5145.5.

Definitions

Sexual Harassment under Title IX: conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the Board conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the Board on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the Board's education program or activity, or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.

Actual Knowledge: notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the District's Title IX coordinator or any employee of an elementary and/or secondary school. This standard is not met where the only District employee with actual knowledge is the respondent.

Complainant: an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Education Program or Activity: includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the District exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment is alleged to have occurred.

Formal Complaint: a document filed by a complainant or signed by the school-based Title IX coordinators alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

Respondent: an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual Assault: an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation as set forth in 20 USC §1092(f)(6)(A)(v).

Dating Violence: means violence committed by a person (a) who has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, and (b) where the existence of such relationship shall be determined based on consideration of the following factors (i) the length of the relationship, (ii) the type of relationship, and (iii) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship as set forth in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(10).

Domestic Violence: includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of Connecticut, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family laws of the jurisdiction as set forth in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(8).

Stalking: means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (a) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others, or (b) suffer substantial emotional distress as set forth in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(30).

Supportive Measures: non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered, as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.

Procedure

It is the express policy of the Board of Education to encourage victims of sexual harassment or those who have knowledge of sexual harassment to report such claims. Students are encouraged to promptly report sexual harassment to the school-based Title IX coordinator or his/her designee. Victims of sexual harassment may file a report of sexual harassment and receive supportive measures. Victims of sexual harassment who want a formal investigation into the sexual harassment must file a written complaint of sexual harassment and request a formal investigation. Formal complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when the respondent is found, after an investigation, to be the responsible party. Retaliation against any individual because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing regarding a claimed Title IX violation is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action against the retaliator.

Legal Reference:

20 U.S.C. § 1681 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

34 CFR Section 106 Regulations implementing Title IX

Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)

RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL MEDIA, & DISTRICT NETWORK SYSTEMS (#6141.321)

Overview

The New Milford Public Schools Board of Education provides students, staff and community members with access to a large variety of technology and network resources which provide multiple opportunities to enhance learning within the school district network and on the Internet. Communication within the school district, the community and global entities are encouraged as part of 21st century skills. All learners need and deserve 21st century learning opportunities to thrive as tomorrow's leaders, workers, and citizens. However, all users must exercise appropriate and responsible use of District technology and information systems. Users include anyone authorized by the administration to use the network. This policy is intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of network information and communication tools.

The District technology infrastructure is defined as all technology related resources, including but not limited to; software, hardware, cabling and connections that provide access to resources, including the internet. District-owned technology devices must be used in accordance with this policy and its accompanying administrative regulations at all times. Personal devices must be used in accordance with this policy and its accompanying administrative regulations whenever the user is accessing the District's network or representing the District in communications. The District maintains content filtering devices and software programs that control access to internal network or internet resources and meet the federal standards established in the Children's Internet Protection Act. (CIPA) Such technology protection measures shall be in operation during any use of computers or other electronic devices with internet access. However, it is recognized that these measures alone are no guarantee that users will not be able to find internet resources which are profane, offensive, obscene, or otherwise objectionable. The ultimate responsibility for appropriate use of internet resources lies with the user.

Digital Citizen

A responsible digital citizen is one who:

A. Respects one's self:

1. Users will select online names and logins that are appropriate and will consider the information and images that are posted online to ensure appropriateness. Users will not share login and password information.

B. Respects others:

1. Users will refrain from using District network systems and social media to bully, tease, or harass other people. Users will communicate in a professional respectful manor with anyone engaged.

C. Protects one's self and others:

1. Users will follow protocols that will protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications.

D. Respects authorship:

1. Users will properly reference or cite work, websites, books, media, etc., used in any student work.

Responsible Use

Responsible use of the District's technology resources is expected to be ethical, respectful, and academically honest. Digital storage on District servers or on the cloud as well as technology devices used for any purpose will be treated as extensions of the District's technology. The Superintendent, or his or her designee, may review files and communications including electronic mail to ensure that users are using the system in accordance with District policy and/or applicable legal requirements. Users should not have any expectation of privacy in files stored electronically. Electronic files, data and communications stored or disseminated through the District's technology may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

Users may not access the District's internal networks or District maintained internet resources without prior written authorization and are expected to comply with the following rules of network etiquette and citizenship, including but not limited to:

- A. Use of the New Milford Public Schools network, technology devices, the student and parent portal, and social media must be consistent with the District's educational objectives and curriculum.

- B. Transmission or storage of material, information, data or files in violation of any local, federal, or state law is prohibited.
- C. Intentional or unintentional use of District resources to access or process, proxy sites, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, harassing, threatening or illegal material or communications or explicit text or files or files dangerous to the integrity of the network is strictly prohibited.
- D. Cyberbullying is prohibited at all times, whether in District or out of District, on any device using any connection.
- E. Software, applications, and media may not be installed, downloaded or uploaded without having an approved Software Form from the Building Principal, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Technology.
- F. Use of the District network for personal commercial activities, product advertisement, religious or political campaigning, lobbying, or unapproved solicitation is prohibited.
- G. Accessing unauthorized chat rooms or instant messaging using the District's network is prohibited.
- H. Bypassing the District's content filter is strictly prohibited.
- I. Users may not share their passwords and are expected to maintain their passwords privately and securely.
- J. Users shall not vandalize, or intentionally or unintentionally damage, disable, disrupt or degrade the District's technology systems or network and may be held personally and financially responsible for malicious or intentional damage or interruptions to network service, software, data, user accounts, hardware, and/or any other unauthorized use.
- K. Files stored on District-managed or cloud networks are the property of the District and may be inspected at any time.
- L. Materials published electronically must be for educational or District purposes. Administrators may monitor these materials to ensure compliance with content standards.
- M. Each user is responsible for taking reasonable precautions to ensure he or she does not introduce viruses into the District's network. All material not belonging to the District must be scanned for viruses prior to being placed onto the District's computer system. Users should understand that their home computers and laptops might contain viruses. All disks, memory sticks or perpetual media (e.g., DVD, CD) transferred from these computers to the District's network must be scanned for viruses.
- N. Users shall not "hack into," "snoop," monitor any network traffic or otherwise access data not intended for the user including, but not limited to, other users' files and administrative data.
- O. Users shall not violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.
- P. Users shall not plagiarize (to take material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own) or cheat (to deceive by trickery, mislead or fool).
- Q. Users shall not maliciously send, transmit, or otherwise disseminate proprietary data, personally identifiable information about students or other confidential information.

Procedures for Use

- A. Students shall receive education about the following:
 - a. Safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and other forms of electronic communications;
 - b. The dangers inherent in online disclosure of personally identifiable information; and
 - c. The consequences of unauthorized access including but not limited to hacking, cyberbullying, and other unlawful or inappropriate activities online.
- B. All student users and their parents/guardians shall be required to sign a written agreement annually, or at the time of enrollment, to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and any administrative procedures and guidelines. If the agreement is not signed, District network privileges will not be given. All student users and their parents/guardians shall be required to sign a written agreement setting forth rules for the use of loaned District technology devices (i.e. Chromebooks) and conditions for reimbursement for lost or damaged devices prior to being loaned a District technology device or devices.
- C. Students shall not (1) access or use another person's account without written permission; (2) share their password with anyone else or engage in activities that would reveal anyone's password; (3) allow others to access a computer that the user is logged on to; or (4) ever sign in, or attempt to sign in, as another person.

Violations and Sanctions

Accessing the internet or District network and utilizing District technology devices is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use and violation of this or any other Board policy may result in cancellation of all network access and disciplinary and/or legal action. Inappropriate material is defined as any material or use that is inconsistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the educational mission of the District. Any user can be denied access temporarily or permanently if the school or District administrator determines that a user has used the internet or District network in an inappropriate or unacceptable manner.

No Expectation of Privacy

All users are warned that there should be no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of the District's computer resources. Users should not create, store or use messages, files or other information which they do not want school authorities to see. The following reasons explain why users should have no expectation of privacy:

- A. The District may have a duty under federal or state law to monitor on-line activities of users and enforce the use of protective measures. Authorized administrators and staff may review use of the District's computer resources and the internet at any time, without reason or prior notice, to maintain system integrity and determine that users are acting responsibly or otherwise consistent with this policy.
- B. Computer resources are owned, controlled, and maintained by the District. They are provided to staff and students to be used for educational purposes only. Files or any information stored on school-based networks are subject to periodic inspection and routine maintenance.
- C. E-mail communications can be stored indefinitely on any number of computers. Copies of messages may be forwarded to others either electronically or on paper. In addition, e-mail sent to non-existent or incorrect user names may be delivered to persons that you never intended.
- D. Use of passwords to gain access to the computer network or to encode particular files or messages does not imply that users have an expectation of privacy in such access or materials. The District has global passwords that permit it to access all material stored on the computer system, regardless of whether that material has been encoded with a particular user's password.
- E. District personnel may receive or create e-mail messages and other documents that are public records that may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

Use of Computer Resources by School Personnel

The computer resources are the property of the District and may only be used for approved purposes. Users are permitted access to assist them in the performance of their jobs. Occasional use of the computer resources by an individual school employee for personal communications is permitted when the use does not interfere with the employee's or other user's job responsibilities, performance of the computer resources, or operation of the District. A short social message and a quick note to a family member are examples of permitted personal use. Use for personal or third party gain or profit, or for entertainment, is strictly prohibited. Solicitation of non-District events or functions will not be tolerated. Employees are reminded that this limited, occasional personal use must comply with this policy, and all other policies, regulations and practices of the District. Use of computer resources is a privilege that may be revoked at any time, in whole or in part, at the sole discretion of the District.

Policy Violations

Users who become aware of any misuse of computer resources must immediately report the incident to the administration. Any violation of this policy may result in immediate termination of school-provided access to computer resources, including the internet. Additional disciplinary action may be taken in keeping with existing policies, procedures and practices regarding the conduct, including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion from school (students) or termination of employment (personnel). When appropriate, law enforcement agencies may be involved and legal action or prosecution may result.

Board Liability

The Board makes no warranties of any kind, neither expressed nor implied, for the use of computer resources and the internet access it is providing.

The Board is not responsible, and shall not be liable, for:

- A. Damage resulting from unauthorized or inappropriate District network or social media activity;
- B. Use of information obtained via the internet, including any damages a user may incur including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors;
- C. The accuracy or quality of information obtained through the internet;
- D. Unfiltered content that may be viewed or downloaded on District equipment that has been provided to individuals for use outside District property;
- E. issues or damage caused by the connection of personal devices to the District's network or improper use of the District's network or equipment; or
- F. Personally owned devices that are damaged, lost, or stolen.

Notice of Policy

Students and school personnel shall be given notice of this policy annually. All other users shall be given notice of this policy prior to obtaining access to or using District computer resources.

Each user is required to sign an Acknowledgement Form stating that they have received notice of and understand this policy and any accompanying administrative regulations.

The administration may issue regulations and guidelines in connection with this policy.

Legal References:

20 U.S.C. 6777 Internet Safety (Children's Internet Protection Act)

47 U.S.C. 254 Universal Service

45 C.F.R. 54.520, "Children's Internet Protection Act certifications required from recipients of discounts under the federal universal service support mechanism for schools and libraries."

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-48d -- Employers engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221 – Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures.

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-228 – Free textbooks, supplies, material and equipment.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A provides additional BOE policies that pertain to students. The complete collection of policies can be found on the New Milford Public Schools website.

SECTION 4: DISCIPLINE

Maintaining discipline within the school is an essential component of ensuring a safe environment in which students can pursue their education and access the school's many extracurricular activities. Despite the school's implementation of PBIS strategies and the use of restorative practices, there are occasions when students may engage in conduct which constitutes a violation of the school district's disciplinary policies, and our school's behavioral expectations. At all times, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with the ongoing operation of the school. Disruptive, discourteous, and unsafe behaviors or actions that violate the rights of others will result in disciplinary action. The use of profanity will not be tolerated at any time. Disciplinary actions may include removal from an activity, parent conference, re-teaching, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE MODEL

To allow teaching and learning to take place, as well as providing a safe and orderly environment for students and staff, Schaghticoke Middle School operates under the Progressive Discipline model which includes:

- Understanding discipline as a "teachable moment" is fundamental to a positive approach to discipline.
- Incremental interventions, whenever possible, to address inappropriate behavior with the ultimate goal of teaching prosocial behavior.
- Responses coupled, when appropriate, with counseling interventions

Essentially, the responsibility for conduct is in the hands of each student. When an action by a student is not in line with an accepted standard, consequences will be applied.

The administration of this policy will not solely focus on punishment but on changing and controlling inappropriate behavior. Therefore, the Progressive Discipline Model will:

1. Provide a disciplinary structure for those who need it;
2. Insure a fair, firm, and consistent enforcement of school regulations;
3. Identify the range of consequences for inappropriate behavior.
4. Support progressive consequences for multiple occurrences of the same behavior

Incremental interventions may not be appropriate in cases in which the misconduct is sufficiently serious as to constitute a basis for suspension or expulsion under Board Policy 5114. In such cases -- and except for conduct for which Connecticut law and Board Policy 5114 mandates expulsion -- the administration will determine the appropriate disciplinary consequence.

Detention

As part of the progressive discipline model, students may be assigned detention to be served during lunch and/or after school.

- Detentions can be assigned by either a teacher or an administrator. A detention assigned by a teacher is to be served with that teacher. Detentions assigned by an administrator are to be served with the administrator.
- Students serving lunch detention should bring their lunch to the assigned location. They will eat during detention.
- Generally, students are allowed one day of advance when assigned a detention. The staff member that assigned the detention will communicate with the parent/guardian.
- There is no after school transportation. Families are responsible for providing transportation for their student at the conclusion of detention.
- All questions or concerns regarding an assigned detention should be directed to the teacher or administrator that assigned the detention.

Loss of Privileges

It is possible for students to be denied school privileges as a result of misbehavior. Examples of privileges which can be

denied include, but are not limited to:

1. Restriction of pass privileges;
2. Extra-curricular participation;
3. Use of facilities (i.e., Library, School Store, Cafeteria, etc.);
4. Participation in social events and class activities, including end-of-the-year events;

Suspension

Students may be suspended for any of the following actions, which occur not only during the regular day but also on school buses and during school-sponsored activities including dances, sporting events, and field trips. This listing is not intended to be all-inclusive, but rather to familiarize the student with typical suspension situations. A full listing of suspendable offenses is set forth in Board Policy 5114.

1. Insubordination (unwillingness to follow directives of school staff, unwillingness to give his/her name);
2. Threatening or physical abuse of staff or students;
3. Use of offensive language or gestures;
4. Damage and/or theft of property;
5. Smoking/tobacco policy violation;
6. Leaving school building and/or grounds without permission during the school day;
7. Disruptive behavior;
8. Possession of dangerous weapons or explosives of any type;
9. Possession and/or use of unauthorized drugs or other intoxicants;
10. Truancy;
11. Title IX violation.

A suspended student is normally given one day's notice prior to serving a suspension. Unless the suspended student presents an extreme and immediate danger to the school and its students, that student will be allowed to complete the school day on which this suspension is issued. The parents/guardians of a suspended student will be notified by telephone, email, or letter after the suspension is issued. No student will be suspended until that student has had an informal hearing with an administrator during which time the student will be informed of the charges and be given the opportunity to respond.

Recent Connecticut legal statutes have specified certain rights for student suspension from school for disciplinary reasons. Among these rights are: access to schoolwork missed and no reduction in grade if such work is completed to the satisfaction of the teacher, and a reasonable limit to the length and number of suspensions a student may receive before the school is obligated to seek other methods of dealing with the student. Complete explanation of these laws is available on request from the school administration.

a) In-School Suspension

"In-school" suspension is assigned for disciplinary consequences for non-injurious offenses. Absences from class by an "in-school" suspension will not result in academic penalty if all academic work is made up. The responsibility for the completion of the make-up work rests with the student. At the time of suspension, the student will be given the opportunity to obtain his/her class assignments or they will be obtained for him/her. Any student who refuses to serve an "in-school" suspension or comply with the procedures may be subject to an "out-of-school" suspension.

Students who serve in-school suspension are ineligible to participate in sports or extracurricular activities until the following day.

b) Out-Of-School Suspension

“Out-of-school” suspension is assigned for disciplinary offenses of a more serious nature. The period of “out-of-school” suspension can be from one to ten consecutive school days. During the period of “out-of-school” suspension, the **student may not participate in any school activities and is not allowed on school grounds AT ANY TIME (before, during, or after school hours) on the day(s) that the suspension is in effect. A STUDENT VIOLATING THIS RULE WILL BE CONSIDERED TRESPASSING AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO ARREST.**

Expulsion

“Expulsion” is defined as exclusion from school privileges for more than 10 consecutive days due to serious offenses. Except in emergencies, a student cannot be expelled without first being offered the opportunity to have an expulsion hearing before the Board of Education, a panel of the Board, or a hearing officer appointed by, and acting on behalf of, the Board. Connecticut law empowers the Board to expel a student for up to one calendar year.

Board Policy Section 5114 sets forth conduct for which the student can be expelled. Although such expulsions are generally within the discretion of the Board of Education, Section 10-233d of the Connecticut General Statutes and Board Policy 5114 enumerate conduct for which an expulsion is mandated. This conduct includes: 1) possession on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity of a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, or martial arts weapon; 2) possession off school grounds of such a firearm in violation of Section 29-35 of the Connecticut General Statutes; 3) possession and use such a firearm, instrument or weapon in the commission of a crime; or 4) on or off school grounds, offered for sale or distribution a controlled substance.

NOTE: It is against school policy for any student to be in possession of an implement that can be used as a weapon. The following is a partial list of items that are not permitted on school property: Chains, Knives, Razor Blades, Pipes, Pepper Spray, Batons, Bats, etc.

If you are unsure whether or not a particular item may be classified as a weapon, please check with your school administrator prior to bringing the item to school.

Conduct off school grounds that violates Board of Education policy could be cause for school-based discipline.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is provided, when feasible, to all students who reside beyond reasonable walking distance of the middle school in accordance with Board Policy 3541. Students riding school buses are bound by the same behavioral expectations in force during the school day. Violations of proper behavior on school buses may result in loss of bus privileges as well as further disciplinary consequences including suspension and expulsion. Smoking, threatening, fighting, disruptions, and use of offensive language are among behaviors that will not be tolerated on the buses. Furthermore, any student who inflicts damage upon a bus will be held financially responsible for the cost of that damage.

Students who leave school grounds during the day without authorization are not permitted back on campus to ride a bus home.

School buses are equipped with video cameras; students should be aware of the possibility of videotaping.

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION CODE OF DISCIPLINE

The following sanctions apply to misbehavior on or around school buses during regular daily bus runs, as well as on field trips and co-curricular bus trips, unless otherwise noted:

Disciplinary actions are defined at three levels given below:

Level I

- eating food, chewing gum, or drinking beverages
- littering the bus
- refusing to use an assigned seat
- refusing to follow reasonable directions of the driver
- use of profane or obscene language

- leaving one's seat while bus is moving
- placing hands, feet, or head out the window
- pushing or shoving others
- disrespect of bus driver

After an initial warning, the administrator will suspend the student from riding privileges for three (3) days, ten (10) days, and thirty (30) days on subsequent infractions. Should such behavior persist or escalate, the student may be subject to further disciplinary consequences, including suspension and expulsion.

Level II

- Fighting/assault/battery
- Entering/exiting through rear door
- Interfering with driver controls
- Smoking
- Throwing articles
- Vandalism

First offense will receive ten (10) days suspension from riding. Subsequent offenses will be thirty (30) days and sixty (60) days. In all cases involving vandalism, the student and/or parent/guardian will be assessed for all costs. Should this behavior result in, or pose a risk of injury, either to the student or to another individual, the student will be subject to further disciplinary consequences, including suspension and expulsion.

Level III

- Using/possessing a dangerous weapon
- Carrying flammable materials

Student will be suspended and reported to the Superintendent for possible expulsion for up to one year.

Procedures for Making Requests or Filing Complaints Concerning School Transportation:

1. Requests for extensions and alterations of service:

These requests should be made in writing to the New Milford Public Schools Director of Operations, 50 East Street, New Milford, Connecticut, 06776.

Upon request, you will be contacted within five (5) business days regarding the disposition of the request. Typically, these requests are not of an immediate or time sensitive nature.

2. Immediate Safety Concerns, Clarification of Existing Routes/Schedules, and Complaints Regarding Existing Transportation Services:

These requests can be made via telephone to the New Milford Public Schools Business Office, 860-354-8726.

3. Student Discipline Issues: All student discipline issues should be addressed with the appropriate administrator.

Students are not to leave the building before dismissal time unless permission is granted by the office to leave early. Unless prior permission is obtained from the office, a student may leave the building only in a school bus or his/her parent's car. Students not taking a bus are to remain in their last period classes until 2:15 unless prior permission has been granted to leave before that time. Parents/guardians who are transporting students home from school must send a note in the morning and sign the student out from the office before leaving. Bus passes for students to ride a different bus will be issued for emergency reasons only, and a note from the parent is required 24 hours in advance with a phone number where the parent can be contacted. A Bus Pass/Dismissal note can be found on our website under forms. Buses are crowded, and we cannot make exceptions. Even emergency requests cannot be guaranteed. Requests for riding a different bus to visit a friend or to work on a school project are not considered emergencies. These notes should be brought to the office, or can be submitted directly from the SMS website.

The New Milford Board of Education is concerned with the safety of students in school and on the bus. The lives of many children are in the hands of the drivers on a daily basis. Following the rules listed above is essential for each child's safety. Violation of the rules is considered a serious offense since it distracts the driver and interferes with the safe operation of the bus. Such offenses will be dealt with in accordance with the Board of Education's policy on bus discipline that may include suspension of the privilege of bus transportation. We ask that you review the rules below with your child as follow-up to instructions that will be provided by teachers and bus drivers. The Board of Education wishes to thank the parents for their cooperation. Students are to be aware that a video security system may be in use on all buses. This will function as an electronic rear-view mirror and we hope that it will help to prevent inappropriate student behaviors.