

# GRISWOLD MIDDLE SCHOOL



## STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

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This planner belongs to:

Homeroom#: \_\_\_\_\_

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### HUMAN RIGHTS

All the people who enter this building shall be entitled to the basic human rights listed below. These rights should apply to all persons, students and staff, throughout the entire school day.

- The right to develop one's own personality (so long as it does not interfere with the rights of others) without disrespectful criticism or pressure from peers.
- Freedom from physical abuse and from mental abuse such as name calling, intimidation, or harassment.
- Freedom from being set apart or mocked because of race, sex, religion, physical strength, size, features, friendship groups, age, culture, handicap, financial status, clothing, classroom performance, or other individual differences.
- Freedom from being harassed in the classroom, the right to being treated respectfully.
- The right to an education which means that teachers should be free to teach and students free to learn without being interrupted by inconsiderate or unruly students.
- The right to have personal and school property respected is a part of human rights. Our school community should be a safe place for property as well as people.

September 2024

**Dear Student:**

The Griswold Middle School Staff welcomes you this year!! We are looking forward to providing you with the necessary support to complete a successful school year. Your handbook will inform you about important school rules, policies and opportunities as well as provide you with several organizational tools.

At GMS, we feel strongly that you are old enough to take responsibility for recording and completing all of your homework in the **assignment section** of your plan book. In addition, your new plan book contains information on a variety of topics including tips for developing better study habits, quick reference charts for math and language arts and calendars. Your plan book is an important tool for you to use throughout the school year. Your teachers, in partnership with your parents, will assist you in becoming a more organized and responsible GMS citizen.

**Dear Parents / Guardians:**

The parents and staff of GMS share a common goal in helping your child succeed in school. In order to accomplish this goal, it is imperative that we communicate and work together to ensure that your child attends school daily, comes to school on time, is an active participant in class, completes all class and homework assignments, and behaves appropriately. This plan book is one vehicle to achieve this mutual goal. We ask that you review this plan book with your child at the beginning of the school year, and periodically throughout the year. This is a tool to organize important information for both you and your child. We encourage you to support us and your child in this endeavor. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Jason Maziarz

Principal

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Please sign and detach this form and return to your child's homeroom teacher by September 15<sup>th</sup>. This form will be kept on file by your child's team leader.

My child, \_\_\_\_\_ and I have reviewed the student plan book for the 2024-2025 school year.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian email address \_\_\_\_\_



## **ABSENCES: ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS**

A pattern of excellent attendance is one of the best indicators for success in school and in later years. However, if the absence is unavoidable on a given day, your parent/guardian should call the school by 7:30 a.m. (258-7741(main office) or 258-7745(Nurse's direct line). An answering machine (258-7741) is available from 3:45 p.m. through 7:30 a.m. to record messages concerning your absence. If a phone call reporting absence is not received by 9:00 a.m., parents will be called at home or work to ascertain the student's safety. Upon your return to school you should bring a signed note from your parent or guardian explaining your absence and including the date of your absence. You may not participate in extracurricular or evening activities on days on which you are absent unless permission is granted by administration.

The Board of Education discourages, and would prohibit if it could, the departure of students for any reason while school is in session. In those situations where there is no alternative, you are allowed one school day for each day you are absent to make up work. Schoolwork is not provided in advance of an absence. Parents or guardians should write a note to or email the principal alerting the school to this absence prior to missing school. In keeping with the Connecticut State Board of Education Policy 10-198b: 5113:

**Excused Absences:** 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 1 – 9, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation; and

B. For the 10<sup>th</sup> absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons: 1.) student illness (Note: all student illnesses absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of length of absence); 2.) student's observation 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 appearance; 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); 6.) extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with CT State Department of Education guidance.

**Unexcused Absences:** A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria: A.) the absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements); and B.) the absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence. **Tardiness to school** - Homeroom begins at 7:45 a.m. During the school year, homerooms will be only 5 minutes long. Students who arrive at school after 7:45 a.m. must report to the main office. Excessive tardiness could result in consequences.

**Excused Tardy** - Students who are tardy to school will be considered excused only if:

- The student's parent/guardian comes into the school and signs the student in. Phone calls or notes will not be accepted unless they provide specific reasons for the tardiness.
- Excessive tardiness due to medical appointments may require a note from a doctor.
- Students will not be excused for reasons such as waking up late, waiting in line in the parking lot, or being delayed at their locker.

Parents who choose to drive their children to school are responsible for ensuring that the student arrives at school on time. Parents will be notified near the end of each quarter if students are excessively tardy.

**-Tardiness to class** - Students are allowed three minutes to pass between classes. Class begins immediately after the bell. If you are late to class, the teacher will take appropriate action. If you are detained by the office or another staff member, the student should be given a pass. Repeat offenders will be referred to the office for further consequences.

**-Dismissal request** - Students who become ill and who normally walk home from school may walk home early, if we have prior written approval from the parent. Similar requirements are also in effect for bus students who wish to walk home.

Bus students will not be allowed to walk home at any time unless we have prior written approval. If for some reason a student must leave early, a parent or designated person must come to the office and sign the student out. A special form is available for parents to sign if they wish to authorize their child to either walk home or receive a ride from someone. Students will not be dismissed by a telephone request.

#### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

It is important to approach all your schoolwork honestly. Cheating on homework and/or tests is forbidden. Cheating occurs when one student possesses, uses, or copies information with the clear intention of presenting it as his or her own original and independent work, or uses it to gain an unfair advantage in a testing situation. Students who cheat will receive appropriate disciplinary action. In addition, forgery and plagiarism are considered academic dishonesty. Moreover, students who allow others to copy their work will receive disciplinary consequences as well.

- a. Forgery - presenting another person's signature and/or other written communication as though it were authentic.
- b. Plagiarism - copying another person's work and presenting it as your own.

**Cheating, plagiarism and forgery offenses can result in a zero grade on the assignment and the assignment of detention or suspension. Cheating can also result in loss of honor roll eligibility for repeat offenses.**

#### **ACADEMIC RESTRICTION:**

Students are placed on academic restriction when they receive a grade below 60 in any one subject at the close of a marking period. Restricted students are not allowed to participate in, or attend any extracurricular activities (i.e. dances, performances, clubs, student advisory, athletics, etc.) **for the duration of the following marking period.** If you are restricted you will be allowed to use the library and the computers to work on assignments, projects or to read.

#### **ACHIEVEMENTS/AWARDS:**

Throughout the year students are given the opportunity to receive awards and recognition for volunteer activities, presentations, and academics, the arts and/or athletics. At the end of the year each grade level and team will conduct award presentations. In addition, the following awards are given to the eighth graders:

CT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS SCHOLAR LEADER AWARD- This prestigious award is given to two eighth grade students in each middle school in CT who have distinguished him/herself in terms of outstanding scholarship and leadership in school and community. A strong cumulative scholastic average. In addition to the academic requirements, students must demonstrate dependability and write an essay to be considered.

CT ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION STUDENT LEADER AWARD-This award is given to two eighth grade students in each middle school who exhibit exemplary leadership skills. The students should show a willingness to take on challenges and commit to a project. They should demonstrate concern for others and diplomacy toward all.

CT ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT'S AWARD -This award gives superintendents an opportunity to recognize all around good school citizens. It is awarded to one boy and one girl in the fall who demonstrate community service, academic performance relative to ability, and leadership within the school community.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE- This award, established by the US Department of Education, recognizes and honors students who have achieved the highest academic status at Griswold Middle School. These students possess a high cumulative average and the work ethic needed to perform at such an outstanding level.

#### PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

This award recognizes students who show outstanding educational growth, improvement or commitment in their academic subjects, and acknowledges students for their hard work and diligent efforts.

#### SUBJECT SPECIFIC AWARDS

These awards are given to the top students in each subject area for each team.

#### PRINCIPAL'S AWARD

This award is given to a student or students who display exemplary acts of respect, responsibility, and pride.

Awards assemblies are held each year in June to recognize student effort and achievement in all areas of school life. In addition, teachers present each team with awards at the end of the year. A special celebration will be planned for eighth graders. Sixth and seventh graders are also recognized for academic achievement in June.

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

You are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. In addition to your academic work, these activities are fun and help you to be an active member of your school.

There are clubs that you can join which may appeal to a variety of your interests. They are scheduled for your enjoyment and enrichment. When you join any club, you should show your support and your interest by regular attendance. While being involved in clubs is an important part of your overall education, be careful not to get involved in so many activities that you can't get to them all. Also, overbooking yourself may have a negative effect on your school work. Contact the main office for our school's most current list of extracurricular activities.

#### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:**

Board policy states that students are not permitted on school grounds prior to the arrival of school buses, which is generally 15 minutes before school (7:30 a.m.). On most days, students wait outside under the canopy until 7:35. On days when the temperature and/or wind chill are unreasonably cold, students will be allowed to enter school at 7:35 a.m. and go to their pod until homeroom begins. You may not leave school grounds once you arrive in the morning.

You will leave school immediately after the dismissal announcements unless you are participating in an after school activity or are serving a detention. If you are participating in an activity or are detained, go directly to the appropriate room. Once you leave school, you may not return for an after school activity unless you obtain permission from the office prior to dismissal. Students are not allowed to loiter on school grounds after dismissal. In addition, students are not allowed on high school or elementary school grounds after school.

#### **ASSEMBLIES:**

Attending assemblies provides you with extraordinary learning experiences. Courteous behavior, of course, is expected at all assemblies and is a requirement for participation in assemblies.

## **ATHLETICS:**

In keeping with the best interests of the health and safety of the students involved in athletic activities and in accordance with the policies of the Rocky Hill Board of Education, a student must have proof of a current physical examination, written parental/guardian permission and a completed an online athletic registration form prior to trying out for, practicing or participating on an interscholastic team. Please reference our Athletic Handbook for more information.

### **PHYSICAL EXAM REQUIREMENTS**

Students participating in interscholastic athletics and cheerleading at Griswold Middle School are required to have a pre-participation physical exam performed by the athlete's private physician. **This physical will be valid for one year, and must include the ENTIRE season for the sport in which the student will participate.** Pre-participation physical exam forms are available in the main office and nurse's office. All questions regarding physicals should be directed to the school nurse.

### **PARENTAL PERMISSION AND INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS EMERGENCY FORM**

Students who try out for an interscholastic athletic or cheerleading team or intramural club must have read the GMS Athletic Handbook and returned an interscholastic informed consent form filled out and signed by a parent or guardian and the prospective athlete as well as a completed interscholastic emergency form - prior to trying out. The emergency form provides us with accurate information in the event of an injury. Informed consent forms and interscholastic emergency forms are available in the main office and nurse's office. Athletic registration information can be found on our website.

**Insurance** - Athletes are covered by the school insurance only during the time they are engaged in a sport, but not during other times of the day or school year. The school insurance is a secondary policy which will assist in payment for an injury sustained during practice or a game. Such payments are at the discretion of the insurance carrier and are paid for costs not covered under the family's primary insurer.

#### **Athletic Activities: Open only to students in grades 7 and 8**

The athletic programs are held throughout the school year and usually consist of:

Cross Country (co-ed)	(September - October)
Soccer (boys and girls)	(September - October)
Basketball (boys and girls)	(November - January)
Cheerleading	(November - January)
Unified Sports (Basketball)	(November – January)
Unified Sports (Volleyball)	(February - March)
Volleyball (co-ed)	(February – March)
Baseball (boys)	(March - June)
Softball (girls)	(March - June)
Track and Field (co-ed)	(March – June)
Wrestling	(November- January)

Due to budget constraints, athletic programs are not a guaranteed school activity.

In addition to the above interscholastic sports, an extensive intramural program is provided at GMS.

**Backpacks, string bags, canvas totes and bookbags** are to be used to and from school only. During the school day they are to be kept in your locker until dismissal or directed by a staff member to do otherwise. Any student needing the use of a



backpack during the day for medical reasons must receive permission and an approval badge from the nurse. In order for backpacks to fit into the school lockers, they should be no larger than the following dimensions: 10.5 X 12 X 34 inches.

#### **BICYCLES:**

You may ride your bicycle to school if you follow these rules: Do not ride your bicycle on school grounds (walk the bicycle in from Bailey Rd.). Lock your bicycle in the rack provided. Upon dismissal, students must walk their bikes from school grounds until they reach Bailey Road.

#### **BINDERS:**

In order to help with organization and study skills, each student at Griswold is required to have the following:

1. A 3-ring loose leaf binder (2-3 inches wide)
2. White-lined paper (avoid college lined)
3. Subject dividers (at least 10)
4. A plastic pouch that fits into the binder
5. Two pens (black or blue ink), two pencils with erasers and a ruler in the pouch

Samples of these binders have been shown to you. Binders are available for preview in the school office and are sold in the school store.

#### **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT:**

The staff of Griswold Middle School has structures and processes in place to proactively address the issue of bullying. It is our hope that our efforts help to continuously improve the culture of our school. It is our priority to provide a safe school that is free of verbal and physical harassment, torment, humiliation, and ridicule. **Verified acts of bullying could result in severe disciplinary action.**

We adhere to our school district's policies when addressing school climate and bullying issues.

#### **BULLYING/SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN:**

##### **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY**

The Rocky Hill Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination. In accordance with state law and the Board's Safe School Climate Plan, the Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board of Education. The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is likewise prohibited. Students who engage in bullying behavior or teen dating violence shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

Please refer to this website (to view the entire Bullying Policy (5310): [www.rockyhillps.com/boedocumentspolicies](http://www.rockyhillps.com/boedocumentspolicies) . This policy and regulations are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

##### **SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN**

The Board is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed the following Safe School Climate Plan, consistent with state law and Board Policy. This Plan represents a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying, cyberbullying and teen dating violence and sets forth the Board's expectations for creating a positive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of

bullying and teen dating violence. Bullying behavior and teen dating violence are strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The district's commitment to addressing bullying behavior and teen dating violence, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

Please refer to this website to view the entire Rocky Hill Safe School Climate Plan (#5320): [www.rockyhillps.com/boedocumentspolicies](http://www.rockyhillps.com/boedocumentspolicies) . This policy and regulations are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

#### **BUSES:**

Conduct on the bus and at your bus stop should reflect consideration for safety and courtesy to others. A complete list of bus rules follows. Failure to comply with bus rules may result in loss of bus privileges, financial restitution, office detention, and/or in-school suspension.

- The driver is in charge of the bus and the students riding the bus. The driver is responsible for enforcing all bus rules and regulations and has the authority to have you report to the office.
- Be on time for your bus.
- When you get on or depart your bus don't cut, push, shove, or risk injury to yourself or others in any way.
- Board and depart your bus only through the front door, except in an emergency.
- If you must cross to get on or after departing your bus, cross only in front of the bus under the direction of your driver.
- After getting on your bus:
  - Take a seat and remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
  - You may not open the bus windows unless your driver has given permission to do so.
  - Please do not extend any part of your body outside the bus windows.
  - Don't engage your driver in unnecessary conversation.
  - **You may not smoke, vape, eat or drink on the bus.**
  - Do not raise your voice or use inappropriate language (obscenity, profanity, etc.)
  - Vandalizing seats or any part of the bus will result in severe consequences, including the possible loss of riding privilege.
  - Do not discard any sort of trash or debris in the bus or out of the bus.
  - Don't attempt to depart anywhere except at your own stop or the school.
  - Don't leave your seat to get off the bus until it has come to a complete stop.
  - Cell phones may not be used to take photographs or videos on the bus.

Students who wish to ride a bus other than the one to which they are assigned may do so only in an emergency. Students must bring in a written note from their parent or guardian, to administration to obtain approval to ride a different bus than the one assigned. The reason must be stated. A special bus pass will be given. Drivers will not allow such students on his or her bus without an appropriate school issued pass.

If you are a bus student and expect to be picked up by someone other than your parent or guardian, you must have written permission from your parent or guardian specifying the person you may ride with. Also, if you wish to walk from school, you must have written permission from your parent or guardian and approval from administration. A walker/rider form is available for parents to sign if they wish to authorize their child to either walk home or receive a ride from someone. Your safety is important to us.

#### **CAFETERIA:**

Cafeteria rules are reviewed at the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the school year. If you don't have lunch or money for lunch, you may request an emergency lunch. You will be responsible for paying for your lunch the next day. You are expected:

- to report directly to the cafeteria with your classroom teacher
- not to loan or borrow money for any cafeteria purchases
- to get directly into the serving line, unless otherwise directed

- not to cut or to give cuts in the serving line
- not to save a table or seat(s) for your friend(s)
- not to leave the cafeteria with food
- not to change tables without permission of the lunch proctor
- not to leave the cafeteria without permission from the teacher on duty and sign the book before leaving the cafeteria
- not to move the cafeteria tables
- not to crowd tables by having more than 14 students seated
- not to leave your table to visit other tables during lunch
- to clean up your table after eating
- to pick up any trash on the floor around your table after eating
- to dispose of all trash in the cans provided
- to remain seated until the teachers supervising the cafeteria calls your teacher your classroom teacher's name
- to sit facing in toward the table
- not to disrupt the cafeteria in any way (i.e. excessive noise, arm wrestling, etc.)
- to bring your own lunch money or lunch to school.
- Remain quiet during dismissal.

**VIOLATION OF THE CAFETERIA RULES WILL RESULT IN EITHER THE LOSS OF YOUR PRIVILEGE TO USE THE CAFETERIA, LUNCH DETENTION, ASSIGNED SEATING, OR OTHER CONSEQUENCES.**

**CELL PHONES & SMART WATCHES:**

Cell phones/ Smart watches may not be used during the school day and must be kept in your locker and remain off. Violations of this policy will result in confiscation of the phone/watch as well as communication with the student's parent/guardian. Administrators and parents will consult regarding the return of the phone. Repeat violations of the phone policy could result in disciplinary action.

**COMMUNICATION:**

You and your parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate your questions, concerns and suggestions to your team teachers or other appropriate staff members. All of your teachers, your counselors, nurse, librarian, administration and the school staff are interested in your success at school. We would also encourage you to visit the Powerschool Parent Portal for information about grades. If you have a concern, always begin by speaking with the person most directly involved first. Your concerns and needs are important to us!

**COMPUTER ACCESS:**

Internet/Network Use - Internet and network access is available to all students and staff at GMS.

The smooth operation of the network and the Internet relies on appropriate conduct and responsible behavior. Users must follow the strict guidelines in the Acceptable Use Agreement that are put into place by the Board of Education. In addition, a student's password is confidential and is to remain confidential. If students violate the guidelines set forth by the Board of Education, they may be denied access to the Internet and/or receive severe disciplinary consequences. Students and their parent/guardian are required to read and sign the Acceptable Use Agreement prior to internet/network access at GMS.

**ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE COMPUTER NETWORK:**

Rocky Hill students should acquire the skills, knowledge, and values that will allow them to function comfortably as a productive citizen in a technology-oriented society. Technology literacy is expected to be accomplished over a number of years in a planned and systematic program through 12th grade.

Continuous evaluation of progress toward this goal is to be conducted by the superintendent and school district staff.

The Board of Education is aware that the Internet is an unregulated communication environment in which information changes constantly and that some of this information is inappropriate for users, based on age and/or developmental levels. The Rocky Hill Public School system has taken precautions such as installing "filter" software to restrict access to inappropriate material. Although guidelines cannot totally eliminate the possibility of inadvertent or unintentional access to objectionable data, we believe we can significantly limit such possibilities.

The Rocky Hill network and internet access has been designed to provide a vehicle for communication with staff and students in Rocky Hill Public Schools. All of the guidelines and expectations for responsible use of the Internet also pertain to use of email and other communication systems.

The Board and its staff will take an active role in ensuring that students and their parents are aware of the responsibility required in using the Internet in an ethical and educational manner.

The Board's goal is to provide "users", anyone who has access to the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools, with the understanding and skills needed to use the Internet appropriately to ensure educational learning. All Student Conduct Policies of the Board of Education will also govern students' use of district technology.

Please refer to the Rocky Hill Public Schools' Website: [www.rockyhillps.com](http://www.rockyhillps.com) for the complete policy and regulations on acceptable use of the computer network,  
Policy # 5000 – Student's Use of the District's Computer Systems

#### **DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR:**

Students may be assigned detentions after school as a disciplinary measure by teachers or administrators. Detentions usually last from 2:35 - 3:30 PM. Each student must bring sufficient materials and books to study for the entire detention period. Students may be required to stay after school without advanced notice. School policy is as follows:

- Students are obliged to stay for detentions the same day they are assigned.
- Students may use the office phone to notify their parent/guardian of the detention.
- Parents may not excuse their youngster for an extended period of time. If there are unusual circumstances, parents may speak to an administrator.
- Immediately after school, students should report to the teacher assigning the detention or in the case of an administrator detention, to the office.

**Students suspended from school, (in-school or out of school) are not permitted to participate in or attend any athletic or extracurricular activities during the day(s) of their suspension(s).** This includes team practices. Students assigned detention(s) that affects participation in practice(s) and games will be dealt with at the discretion of the coach. Further, students who are suspended externally, are not permitted on school property during the period of their suspension.

**Office Detentions:** An office detention is assigned by administration only. An assignment will be given to students that will take the entire period of the detention to complete.

**BEHAVIOR:** GMS has adopted the ***Positive Behavior Intervention System***. "PBIS", as it is commonly referred to, is designed to establish a more proactive approach to preventing and responding to school wide discipline problems. An improved, more consistent approach to communicating rules and regulations has been developed and students are formally and informally recognized for their demonstration of our school values: ***RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, and PRIDE***. Students are recognized daily and during our monthly grade level "**Pod Meetings**" as teachers and administrators present students with "**Positive Office Referrals**". Students who demonstrate exemplary effort and citizenship are eligible for the "**Student of the Month Award**", which is also presented at these monthly meetings. (See the last 2 pages of this handbook for additional information on GMS's PBIS Program.)

**DISCIPLINE:**

At Griswold we expect our students to behave in a courteous and considerate manner, respecting the rights, feelings and property of others.

Most issues will be addressed by your teachers through dialogue, lunch detention, after school detention, parental contact and/or team referral. At times it will be necessary for teachers to refer students to the assistant principal or the principal for serious or repeat misbehavior. The following items are considered "No Tolerance Items" at GMS and will result in an automatic office referral:

- Fighting - When a physical fight occurs between individuals, the parties involved will automatically receive an external suspension of up to 10 school days by administration. Any pushing or shoving can be considered a potential fight and will result in an office consequence as well.
- Students who engage in slapping another student on the back or any other part of the body with the intent of leaving finger marks should expect to be suspended, for up to 5 days.
- "Pantsing" is the act of pulling down another student's pants, gym shorts or other clothing. This behavior will result in an automatic 5 day internal suspension for the first offense. Subsequent offenses will result in up to a 10 day external suspension.
- Students may carry water bottles, but may **not** carry any other beverages during the school day.
- Dangerous items: The use of any sort of item that is considered to be dangerous when used with the intention of causing pain such as paper clips shot with elastic bands, etc will result in internal or external suspension.
- Illegal behaviors - Possession of weapons, tobacco, smoking materials, alcohol, or explosive devices, gambling, extortion, and theft are considered illegal behaviors and will result in an automatic suspension and possible expulsion.
- Vandalism - This is considered to be any destruction of private or school property while in school, on school grounds, or during a school event.
- Selling or purchasing of items without administrative permission or permission from the Board of Education will result in an office referral.
- Defiance - This occurs when students perform an inappropriate act repeatedly. Initially, the teacher will provide the consequences. If the behavior(s) continue to occur, the student will be referred to the office.
- Leaving the classroom/school building without permission from an adult supervisor.
- Truancy - Unexcused absences from the parent(s) or legal guardian. The consequence will be a suspension.
- Harassment - This occurs when comments, actions, or behaviors indicate sexual, ethnic, socioeconomic, or racial slurs. In addition, bullying is considered an extreme form of harassment.
- Threats – (an expression of intention to inflict injury or damage) Threats of violence against students or staff will result in immediate suspension from school.
- Inappropriate clothing - If clothing items are considered questionable under our school policy guidelines, teachers will refer the student to the office. Please review dress code guidelines in the appropriate section.

**Please refer to this website to view the entire Rocky Hill Discipline Policy.**

**(#5510):[www.rockyhillpa.com/boedocumentspolicies](http://www.rockyhillpa.com/boedocumentspolicies).**

**DRESS CODE:**

The purpose of the dress code at GMS is to promote a healthy, safe, clean and productive learning environment. The following guidelines will be followed while you are a student at GMS:

- Footwear will be worn at all times.
- Hats or headgear (bandanas, scarves etc. are not allowed).
- Shorts and skirts are acceptable, however, should be no shorter than mid thigh length.
- Shirts must lie over the waistband of pants. The straps of a shirt have to be at least an inch wide, and may not be transparent or mesh.
- Baggy pants are worn with a belt at the waist and under clothing must be covered at all times.
- Coats and jackets are **not** allowed to be worn during the school day.
- Clothing that has rips that reveal an excessive amount of skin is prohibited.
- Clothing should meet a reasonable standard of health, safety and decency.

- Attire or accessories with logos or emblems that represent drugs, alcohol or tobacco are not allowed. In addition, attire which conveys a message which is vulgar, hateful, distracting or promotes illegal discrimination is prohibited.
- Sneakers that have wheels attached are not allowed in school unless the wheels have been removed and left home.

**EARLY DISMISSAL:**

At GMS early dismissal is at 11:40am. In the event of an early dismissal, we encourage all students to have a plan with their parents/guardians as to where they should go or what to do.

**EARLY INTERVENTION – RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)/Tier I Support:**

The Griswold Middle School Tier I Support Team consists of the various staff members who work together to address the needs of students who may be experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties. Referral to the team may be made by staff members. There are various levels of support and a variety of interventions that may be implemented.

**EVENING ACTIVITIES:**

Students must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to attend an evening activity (i.e. play, band or choral production etc.).

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES:**

Students may not bring electronic devices, toys or items that distract from the education process to school.

**FIELD TRIPS:** Teachers may sponsor class or group trips to various places of educational interest. Please note that transportation to and from the activity must be by a school provided bus. A student may be refused to attend a field trip for a specific behavioral reason. Students are reminded that all school rules are in effect during field trips.

**FIRE DRILLS/LOCK DOWN DRILLS:**

As required by the State, fire drills are held throughout the year. The purpose of the fire drill is to reinforce the precautions necessary in the case of emergency. Be sure to follow the directions posted in classrooms. **Everyone must evacuate the building.** All windows and doors must be closed before leaving a room in the building, and all power sources and gas valves must be turned off. When the signal sounds, you should proceed in a single file, without talking or running, under the direction of your teacher.

Should the alarm sound between classes, please leave by the nearest exit. If you are in the cafeteria, follow the direction of the cafeteria supervisors. Once outside, quickly find the teacher of the class to which you were reporting and stand quietly for accurate attendance. Should a real emergency occur, this will be necessary to ensure that everyone has left the building. Do not go back into the building until you are told by your teacher. Lock down drills will be held periodically. During a lockdown drill, students must remain in a designated area within their classrooms and remain quiet.

**GRADING:** Grades will be determined using the following criteria:

Outstanding	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 and below
A 93-96	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Medical (ME) and Incomplete (IN) grades are used to allow marking period extensions for students absent from school for acceptable reasons.

**Incomplete grades:**

Students who receive an Incomplete ("IN") in a subject for the marking period will be allowed five days to make up the incomplete work after the quarterly grades have been closed. If this make up work is not done, the Incomplete will be changed to an "F".

**GUIDANCE:**

The school counselors are available to help you in your educational, social, vocational and personal development. The counselors will assist you in planning your school program, improving your study habits, developing good decision-making skills and coping with problems. An open door policy always exists for any urgent request.

**GUM, CANDY, and Other Consumables**

Gum and candy may not be consumed in school. Any gum or candy must be left in school lockers during the school day. Food and drink can only be consumed in the café during lunch waves. Energy drinks are not allowed in school. Violation of this policy can result in disciplinary consequences.

**HOMEROOM:**

Homeroom is five minutes in length. During homeroom, time is provided for attendance taking, a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance and morning announcements. Announcements are also made at the end of period eight.

**HOMEWORK:**

Homework is used to reinforce learning, practice skills, extend knowledge, and complete projects which cannot be done in class. You are RESPONSIBLE for completing all homework assignments. Homework is to be handed in on time and neatly done. Rocky Hill Board of Education Policy requires 60-90 minutes spent on homework per night for middle school students.

Homework will be included in student grades. Listed are the approximate percentages each class will use to calculate homework into the overall grade per semester.

Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies	World Language	Family & Consumer Science	Music	Health
15%	15%	20%	20%	10%	10%	10%	10%

**HONOR ROLLS:**

When the school honor rolls are determined all subjects taken by a student are considered equal regardless of the frequency of class meeting times. Any grade earned which is below a 70, disqualifies a student from being awarded honors. Cheating, of any sort, (i.e. homework, final examination etc.), can disqualify a student from being awarded honors. Students who attain a numerical average of 94 or better are awarded "High Honors". Students whose averages range between 90 and 93 are awarded "General Honors". Grade point averages are not rounded up. To determine your average, add up all grades assigned for the quarter and divide by the number of grades. The average that you get is not rounded up when figuring your grade average. Remember, any grade lower than a 70 automatically disqualifies one for the honor roll.

**LATE BUS:**

**The rules that apply to the use of the regular bus also apply to the late bus.**

- A late bus is available for students who remain after school for extra help, an afternoon activity or detention. The late bus arrives at approximately 3:30 PM. An announcement will be made for the students to come to the office to sign the late bus sheet.
- Students may not leave the school grounds after school then return to take the late bus home.
- Bus students who stay after school may not walk home unless the school has previously received written permission from their parent(s) or guardian(s). A special form is available for parents to sign if they wish to authorize their child to either walk home or receive a ride from someone.
- Students may take the late bus from the Middle School only. You may not walk to the high school to catch the late bus.

- Students may take the late bus from the Middle School only. You may not walk to the high school to catch the late bus.
- **There is no late bus on Fridays.**

**No student may stay after school except under the direct supervision of an adult.**

**LAVATORIES:**

Student lavatories are located throughout the building. You may use the lavatories with permission from your teacher. Students should not spend any more time in the lavatory than necessary. Misuse of lavatories will result in disciplinary action.

**LIBRARY:**

The library/Media Center is an information center. Students are allowed to conduct research, work on projects, or read quietly. The library is open daily.

All students who are not scheduled for the library must enter the library with a pass from your teacher. Any computer misuse that violates school or board policy is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action.

**LOCKERS:**

You will be assigned a locker at the beginning of the school year. You should take care of your locker and of your assigned school property. Never allow another student to know your locker combination. Students may not switch lockers unless there is a problem with the one assigned to you. Only a teacher or administrator can authorize a locker change. In addition, lockers must never be "rigged" to remain unlocked. You will be allowed to visit your locker at the beginning of school, and at times designated by your team. Plan ahead and carry what you need. Lockers are the property of the school and may be inspected at any time.

**LOST AND FOUND:**

Lost items should be turned to the grade level pods or the cafeteria. You may check for lost items before or after school with the permission of your teacher. They are left in a special place in the pod & cafe. Periodically, the items left behind are donated to charity.

**MAKE UP WORK:**

If you are absent you are responsible for getting and making up all assignments missed. Immediately upon returning from an absence, students are required to arrange a make-up work schedule with each of their teachers. For extended an absence (three or more days), assignments can be obtained by calling the office. For a one or two day absence, you may call a friend or make up the assignments upon returning. Students are allowed one school day for each day of absence to make up work. Marking period extensions and/or make up work time are not allowed for unauthorized student absences such as family vacation periods which occur while school is in session.

**MONEY AND VALUABLES:**

We strongly advise against students bringing large amounts of money or other valuables to school. If there is no other choice and for some unusual reason you must bring valuables to school, be certain to check them in the office for safekeeping or be sure to secure all lockers (including PE).

The school is not responsible for the loss of property.



**NURSE:**

Our school nurse is on duty during the school day. Any student who is ill must report directly to the nurse's office. If the nurse is not present, students should immediately report to the main office. Students are requested to share medical information with the nurse so that records are accurate. If you need to contact the nurse during school hours, her direct line is 258-7745.

**ON TEAM TIME:**

On Team time is for the purpose of completing homework, making up work, subject research, extra help, studying or reading. Students will be allowed to leave On Team with a pass signed by a teacher stating the student's specific destination. Students excused for the entire period must present a pass signed by the teacher of destination at the beginning of the period. The only passes which will be written by the on team teacher are ones which permit a student to go to the lavatory, media center, office, nurse or guidance.

**PASSING:**

You are expected to walk to the right while passing in the corridors. Never run during passing and always use the most direct route.

**REPORT CARDS:**

Report Cards are distributed on the dates indicated on the marking period schedule. Report cards are sent home via email.

A student's progress can also be monitored by parents via the **Parent Portal**. Please contact the school should you have any questions regarding access.

**RETENTION:**

Students who fail two or more courses from the group composed of English, mathematics, social studies, science and foreign language are liable for retention. Students are considered for retention who fail one course from this group and three or more other courses.

Progress is closely monitored during the school year. The counselors meet each marking period with students who are not doing well. Shortly after the end of the second marking period, students who are in danger of failing for the year are advised that retention is a possibility. Parents of those students are also notified via phone calls, written correspondence, or with meetings.

At the conclusion of the third marking period, the school notifies, in writing, the parents of students who are in serious danger of being retained. The final decision concerning retention is made as soon as possible after the conclusion of the fourth marking period by the building principal with input from all concerned.

**RIDES:**

Students should arrange for rides prior to an after school activity that ends later than 3:30. In other words, if a student knows that he/she will need a ride on a given day, that ride should be arranged the day before and not the day of the event. This will considerably ease office traffic caused by students who want to use the phone to arrange for pick-up. A special form is available for parents to sign if they wish to authorize their child to either walk home or receive a ride from someone other than a parent.

**SCHOOL CLOSING:**

Emergency/storm closings and delayed openings are announced on the radio and on TV at approximately 6:30 a.m. A phone call and email from our automated alert system will be sent to you as well. On delayed opening mornings homeroom begins at 9:45 a.m.

In the event of closing or early dismissal due to weather, all afternoon and evening activities scheduled for the schools ARE POSTPONED AUTOMATICALLY unless announced otherwise on the radio.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, usually weather related, school may be dismissed earlier than the regularly scheduled time. On these days, lunch will be served. Parents/guardians should make sure that they have made plans with their children on what to do if school is dismissed early.

**STRIKE SYSTEM (7<sup>th</sup> & 8th Grade only):**

The strike system has been established as an incentive for positive student behavior. The strike system is in effect from October 1st until the end of the year (*except in the case of fighting or other serious misbehavior whereby students will be issued strikes starting on the first day of school*). During this time, disciplinary incidents that require an office referral will result in strikes which count against privileges such as Field Trips,, the Celebration Ceremony, and the seventh grade trip/trips. A detailed explanation of the strike system and other participation requirements will be given to each seventh and eighth grade student to review with parents prior to the first class trip.

**STUDENT OF THE MONTH CRITERIA:**

Students of the Month are chosen by their team teachers based on the following criteria: enthusiasm for learning, citizenship and attitude, helpfulness to the school and the team. Students are considered who demonstrate creativity, independence and responsibility, academic success, and outstanding achievement or performance in the school.

**STUDENT COUNCIL:**

The purpose of the student council is to provide you with an opportunity to participate in the organizing and managing of school affairs. The members meet to plan student activities and community service projects. Interested students can request applications from their team leaders.

**TELEPHONE:**

Students will not be called to the telephone except in case of an emergency. However, important messages will be delivered to students by the office staff. Telephones in classrooms and the office are not to be used by students without the permission of staff. Students may use the office telephone, with permission of the administration, for emergency purposes only. **Cell phones may not be used during the school day and must be kept in a locker and shut off.**

**TEXTBOOKS/CHROMEBOOKS/ HEADPHONES/BLUETOOTH HEADPHONES:**

All textbooks are school property and are loaned to you for the school year. You are responsible for any loss or damage occurring while books are assigned to you. You are required to cover hardbound textbooks

Chromebooks and chargers are school property and loaned to you for the school year. In the event of incurring any damage the charge to replace a chromebook is \$250.00 and the cost to replace a charger is \$35.00.

Students are asked to bring a pair of headphones to use during the day with their chromebooks.

**TRANSFER:**

Any student who intends to transfer from Rocky Hill to some other school must first see a guidance counselor. Notice in writing must be given by a parent. In addition, the student must check out with all assigned teachers of courses in which he/she is involved, the librarian, guidance counselor and principal.

**VISITORS:** Visitors are required to use the entry system located at the front door to get into the building.

Any person visiting the school must first check in at the main office and state the reason for the visit. In addition, the visitor will need to sign in at the office and receive a visitor's pass. Every courtesy will be extended to guests of the school, but violators of this rule will be asked to leave immediately.

## **WEAPONS:**

No weapon, or device which may be used as a weapon, may be brought to school at any time. This includes items which, while primarily decorative in nature, may be used as a weapon. The penalty for any infraction is immediate suspension for a time to be determined by the administrator. The use of any device to cause or attempt to cause bodily harm shall result in immediate suspension, referral for expulsion, and notification of the police for possible criminal action.

## **BOARD DISCIPLINE POLICY (5510)**

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

#### I. Definitions

A. Dangerous Instrument means any instrument, article or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, and includes a "vehicle" or a dog that has been commanded to attack.

B. Deadly Weapon means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon or metal knuckles. A weapon such as a pellet gun and/or airsoft pistol may constitute a deadly weapon if such weapon is designed for violence and is capable of inflicting death or serious bodily harm. In making such determination, the following factors should be considered: design of weapon; how weapon is typically used (e.g. hunting); type of projectile; force and velocity of discharge; method of discharge (i.e. spring v. CO2 cartridge) and potential for serious bodily harm or death.

C. Electronic Defense Weapon means a weapon which by electronic impulse or current is capable of immobilizing a person temporarily, but is not capable of inflicting death or serious physical injury, including a stun gun or other conductive energy device.

D. Emergency means a situation in which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of such student as possible.

E. Exclusion means any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.

F. Expulsion means the exclusion of a student from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days and shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, exclusion from the school to which such pupil was assigned at the time such disciplinary action was taken. The expulsion period may not extend beyond one (1) calendar year.

G. Firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C § 921, means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon, (c) a firearm muffler or silencer, or (d) any destructive device. The term firearm does not include an antique firearm. As used in this definition, a "destructive device" includes any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas device, including a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or any other similar device; or any weapon (other than a shotgun or shotgun shell which the Attorney General finds is generally recognized as particularly suited for sporting purposes) that will, or may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by explosive or other propellant, and which has a barrel with a bore of more than ½" in diameter.

The term "destructive device" also includes any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. A "destructive device" does

not include: an antique firearm; a rifle intended to be used by the owner solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes; or any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon.

H. In-School Suspension means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one (1) school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.

I. Martial Arts Weapon means a nunchaku, kama, kusari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or chinese star.

J. Removal is the exclusion of a student from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond ninety (90) minutes.

K. School Days shall mean days when school is in session for students.

L. School-Sponsored Activity means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.

M. Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process, as applied to off-campus conduct, means any conduct that markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of a school.

N. Suspension means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such suspension shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed; and further provided no student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless such student is granted a formal hearing as provided below.

O. Weapon means any BB gun, any blackjack, any metal or brass knuckles, any police baton or nightstick, any dirk knife or switch knife, any knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, any stiletto, any knife the edge portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length, any martial arts weapon or electronic defense weapon, or any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, unless permitted by law under Section 29-38 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

P. Notwithstanding the foregoing definitions, the reassignment of a student from one regular education classroom program in the district to another regular education classroom program in the district shall not constitute a suspension or expulsion.

For a complete explanation of discipline policies, please refer to the following website:.

**WEBSITE: [www.rockyhillps.com/boedocumentspolicies](http://www.rockyhillps.com/boedocumentspolicies)**

### **RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND PRIDE**

The mission of Griswold Middle School is to provide the best possible educational environment which promotes academic, social, and emotional growth and achievement in an effort to create respectful and responsible members of the school and the community.

All students at Griswold Middle School are part of a family of individuals who work, learn, and socialize together each day during the school year. An important part of a complete education at GMS experience requires practicing our school's 3 core values: respect, responsibility, and pride. School personnel will make every effort to recognize students who display these values.