



2017-18

**Parent/Guardian/Student
Handbook**

EWSD Central Office Administrative Directory

Superintendent	Beth Cobb
Chief Operating Officer	Brian Donahue
Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	Amy Cole
Director of Human Resources	Deb Anderson
Director of Learning Design	Ellen Thompson
Director of Legal and Contract Services	Paul O'Brian
Co-Director of Student Support Services	Dylan McNamara
Co-Director of Student Support Services	Erin Maguire
Director of Technology	Vince Gonillo

EWSD Central Office

51 Park Street/58 Founders Road - Essex Junction, VT 05452

(phone) 802-878-8168; (fax) 802-878-5190



Visit us online: www.ewsd.org

Follow us on Twitter: twitter.com/essexwestford

Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/essexwestford



Use of Social Media: Online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration used face-to-face. Any speech that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online. This includes, but is not limited to: profanity; racist, sexist or discriminatory remarks; and personal attacks. All EWSD policies and procedures are relevant when using social media. For example, using individual Facebook accounts to post personal complaints or sharing individual judgments about people or schools, can be disruptive to the educational process and the partnership we are striving to create between schools and families.

Social media posts that occur outside the school building or the school day and become an issue in school, may be addressed by administration and/or law enforcement. These guidelines are pursuant with the prevention of harassment, hazing, and bullying policy and those of the responsible computer, network and internet use policy.

SUPERINTENDENT’S MESSAGE

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the first school year of the newly formed Essex Westford School District! We are excited to be “one community.”

Our handbook is a result of collaborative work across the district. As a result of the merger, we have one set of policies and procedures. The policies, adopted by the EWSD Board, can be found on our EWSD website (www.ewsd.org). The administration continues to work on procedures, many of which, will be familiar to you. The procedures will also be found on the website.

As a school district, the relationships we form with students and families are extremely important. Our partnership is crucial in creating a safe and respectful learning environment for all. It is important that we know and understand the expectations that are laid out in the handbook. We are asking that you take time, as a family, to review and familiarize yourselves with the handbook.

As the new superintendent, I look forward to meeting you and building relationships as we create a sense of one community for our students across Essex Junction, Essex Town, and Westford.

Yours in education,

Beth Cobb
EWSD Superintendent

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FORMS

All forms mentioned throughout this handbook are available at www.ewsd.org or can be obtained by contacting the school.

SCHOOL LIFE AND EXPECTATIONS

ATTENDANCE

School Start and End Times:

School	Start	End
Albert D. Lawton	7:45 a.m.	2:40 p.m.
Center for Technology	8:05 a.m.	2:05 p.m.
Essex Elementary	8:25 a.m.	2:55 p.m.
Essex High School	8:00 a.m.	2:35 p.m.
Essex Middle School	7:35 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
Founders Memorial	8:35 a.m.	3:10 p.m.
Hiawatha	8:05 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Summit Street	8:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Thomas Fleming	8:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Westford	8:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.

Regular attendance at school is essential for academic progress. Vermont law requires regular school attendance by students. Parents and guardians of students enrolled in school (regardless of their age) are required by law to ensure their children's attendance at school. We believe regular attendance is necessary to assure academic growth, as well as the development of responsible work and study habits. If your child will not be in attendance, please call the school or fill out the online absence form before the start of the school day and state the reason for the planned absence.

Note: CTE students must also call the program instructor between 7:15 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Valid causes for an absence include: illness, observance of religious holiday, death in the family, family emergency, or situations beyond the student's control. Valid causes are reported to the school by the parent or guardian in writing or verbally. Parents or guardians should call the school's attendance line as early as possible to report their child's illness. Reporting absences to the school is an important method of enhancing student safety - we want to make sure that every student sent to school arrives at school. Parents or guardians requesting that excused absences be granted must make a written application in advance of the absences to the school principal.

Tardy students must report to the school office as soon as they arrive so that there is an accurate count of people in the building for safety reasons. Being late for school

puts students at a disadvantage. Incidents of tardiness will be recorded and letters of concerns will be sent from the school when a pattern of tardiness is documented. School personnel are always available to provide parents with strategies to assist them in getting their children to school on time.

If your child must leave school before the end of the day, send written permission, including the reason for early dismissal and the student's destination, to the office. To pick up your child, sign the early dismissal log in the school office. School personnel will call the child's teacher to send your child to meet you in the office. Parents should not go directly to their child's classroom.

A student is truant if he/she is absent without a valid cause or excuse. Letters will be sent from the school when there is concern about the number of student absences.

Truancy: Staying in school is the first step to good education. A student shall be declared truant if that student has had any absence from school for more than 20 days during the course of the year.

Per state law, school interventions shall occur after a student misses 10, 15, 20 days. Continued truancy shall result in affidavits being filed with appropriate State agencies and the State Attorney General's office.

CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES

EWSD believes that, in order to achieve their full academic potential, students' healthy eating patterns are essential. A well-planned and implemented school nutrition program positively influences students' eating habits. Consuming a variety of nutritious foods promotes healthy growth and development, and provides the necessary energy for learning.

Food and Beverages: Food and beverages are allowed at school during specified times and/or in designated areas. Unless approved by the principal, and at the discretion of the classroom teacher, consumption of snacks, candy, gum, and/or beverages isn't permitted during instructional time.

Free Lunch and Breakfast Program: Free meals are available for students if the family qualifies under federal guidelines. For families that qualify for reduced meals, they are now offered at no cost, with the State contributing to the "reduced" amount.

Information regarding these programs will be sent home with students the first day of school and is also available at www.ewsd.org/Page/2414. All information provided on these forms is kept strictly confidential. Please call the Child Nutrition Services Director at 879-5544 for more information. Applications can be filed at any time during the school year.

Menus: Menus will be posted throughout the school, will be on the EWSD and school web-sites, and may be included in periodic newsletters and/or information sent home.

Overdue Accounts: Parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their student's accounts closely. Parents/guardians/students can view account balances, items purchased, and register for email "low account" notifications at www.myschoolaccount.com. If a student's account is negative, or a purchase creates a negative account balance, the student and parent/guardian will be notified. The EWSD Child Nutrition Services will follow-up with the parent/guardian to arrange for payment, or to assist with the application process for the Free Lunch and Breakfast Program. The EWSD Child Nutrition Services operates on a debit system - meaning all accounts must be prepaid and have a positive balance. If accounts become delinquent, the EWSD Child Nutrition Services may close a debit account and require cash purchases. If, during the year, family financial conditions change, please notify the EWSD Child Nutrition Services or the school principal for Free Lunch and Breakfast Program information and an application, which can be filed at any time during the school year.

Payments: Meals must be prepaid - weekly or monthly prepayment is encouraged. Balances may be monitored by the parent/guardian/student at www.myschoolaccount.com (the food service number is the same as the Student ID Number).

- **ACH:** For all schools, electronic transfers from savings/checking accounts will be accepted into child nutrition accounts using www.myschoolaccount.com. There will be a service provider fee of \$2.00 per transaction and a debit/credit card processing service fee of four percent. Transactions before 11:00 p.m. will be posted at 5:00 a.m. the next morning.
- **Cash:** Cash is always accepted for deposit into individual accounts or for payment of purchases on a daily basis.
- **Check:** For all schools, checks may be payable to the EWSD Child Nutrition Service. Payments are deposited in an account for the student and a debit system is used to purchase meals and adjust the account. Please write the student's name or Student ID Number on the check to ensure proper posting.

Pricing: Meal prices are posted at <https://www.ewsd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=2413>. Our lunch and breakfast programs are federally subsidized. Because the federal government does not subsidize adult meals, adult meal prices are higher than student prices.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The District strives to provide a safe and inviting place for students and staff. Maintaining a climate of safety and respect is everyone's responsibility. It is expected that both children and adults will respect the rights of all others in helping to create a safe environment.

Courtesy and consideration for people and property is expected of students while in school and at school-related functions, regardless of location.

Disciplinary procedures will be considered within the context of the circumstances. Consequences may also arise for misconduct that occurs off school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

Discipline Philosophy and Student Expectations and Consequences: The consequence for every offense cannot be prescribed and may include disciplinary consequences and/or restorative practices. The Board believes every offense should elicit an appropriate consequence. It also recognizes the need for discretion and sensitivity with regard to the unique circumstances of each case.

Consequences for failure to meet student expectations and violations of school policies may result in, but not be limited to, disciplinary actions, including: loss of appropriate activity or privilege, disciplinary warning, detention, community service, probation, suspension, long-term suspension or other restorative or disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by school administrators.

According to policy, students who violate drug and alcohol expectations will be removed from participation from all extra and co-curricular activities for three months. Co- and extra-curricular activities include: participation on sports teams, clubs, drama productions, attendance at athletic contests, dances, graduation exercises, and those school-sponsored organizations, activities, and events not directly related to the academic and/

or testing programs. Violations of weapons policies may result in long-term suspension. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to consult the district's policy manual for specific details on suspension and long-term suspension.

While out of school, the student is expected to work on school-related tasks and complete all homework. Suspension or long-term suspension may result in the loss of academic credit or loss of grade for assignments due or tests taken during suspension or long-term suspension.

Chronic violation of student expectations will result in increased severity of disciplinary consequences and may ultimately result in long-term suspension and loss of credit.

Examples of behaviors that will result in disciplinary consequences include: insubordination or failure to comply with a reasonable request from staff; threats of any sort; profanity; bullying; harassment; fighting or assaulting behavior of any type on school premises or at any school function regardless of location; lying; stealing; hazing; trespassing; deliberate destruction of property; use of fraud in any school-related activity; willful creation of any safety hazard or mischievous activation of any type of safety or fire alarm.

The Administration and School Board may also discipline any student for misconduct on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the pupil harmful to the welfare of the school, or the misconduct does not occur on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated. Additionally, the Administration and the School Board may discipline any student for misconduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

The Administration will use discretion, where such flexibility is permitted, in the application of consequences. Disciplinary consequences imposed by the administration shall be final and not subject to appeal. What follows are guidelines, benchmarks, and portions/summaries of policies used most often.

Preparation for an active participation in learning: It is important for students to be engaged. Full and active participation means listening, talking, doing, creating,

reading, laughing, thinking, drawing, searching, or anything else involved in the learning process. Being prepared for class means being on time, begin ready to start, having all necessary supplies, and completing homework before class begins.

Positive attitude toward learning: A positive attitude means trying new things, establishing goals, and becoming involved in one's studies. Students must challenge themselves and put forth the effort to learn new content and skills.

Respect for self, others, and the environment: Respect is a central theme in all of our schools. Words and actions should be considerate of people and things. This means polite language, a helpful attitude, and a regard for property. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to staff, faculty, and to one another.

Hazing, Harassment, Bullying and Retaliation

Retaliation for making a report of HHB or participating in an investigation into allegations of HHB is prohibited. The School District will take appropriate action against any student, volunteer, contractor, or employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of HHB. Retaliation against a student can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to: any form of intimidation, reprisal, or continued hazing, harassment, and or bullying. A student that feels as they are experiencing retaliation for making a report of HHB or being involved in the investigation of an alleged HHB incident should immediately report the situation to a Designated Employee.

Each school campus has at least two Designated Employees that are charged with receiving and investigating reports of hazing, harassment and bullying. Any person who believes they have been the victim of hazing, harassment and/or bullying or the victim of retaliation by making a complaint of such behavior, or any person with knowledge or evidence of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to a Designated Employee, a school administrator, coach or the superintendent's office.

Teachers, administrators, volunteers, contractors, coaches, or other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing, harassment, bullying and/or retaliation. Any such person who receives knowledge or evidence of conduct which may constitute these behaviors shall inform the building principal or assistant principal or Designated Employee.

The following is a list of Designated Employees for HHB reporting for each school campus:

ADL: Jennifer Wood, Amie Conger, and Nicole Williams

CTE: Robert Travers and Carolyn Dickinson

EES: Peter Farrell and Julia McGrath

EHS: Ben Johnson, Louise Strong, and Mark Floyd

EMS: Kevin Briggs

Fleming: Dan Ryan and Amy Bigelow

Founders: Wendy Cobb and Joe Arigo

Hiawatha: Katherine Grykien and Scott Evans

Summit: Suzanne Gruendling and Ashley Cate

Westford: Marcie Lewis and Vanessa Habedank

The EWSD School District is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. It is the policy of EWSD to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and other legally protected status under federal or state law.

EWSD holds the civil rights of individuals in great esteem and importance as we consider access to our school environments. We are dedicated to creating a safe and non-discriminatory environment for all students. Privacy is also an important issue for any student who feels a need for privacy regardless of gender identify or sex assignment. In order to be supportive and to create safe spaces for of all our students, all bathrooms and locker rooms across EWSD will be accessible to students and people in our schools based on their identified gender.

It is also the policy of EWSD to prohibit the unlawful hazing, harassment, bullying of its students and prohibits retaliation against students for making complaints of HHB or their involvement in an investigation into HHB.

EWSD shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board - who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board's disciplinary

policies or the school's code of conduct.

- **Bullying:** All EWSD schools should be a safe and kind learning environment, free from any bullying. Bullying is a form of dangerous and disrespectful behavior not permitted or tolerated within EWSD schools.

Definition: "Bullying means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

1. Is repeated over time
2. Is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
3. Occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity; or does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's right to access educational programs.

Please note that bullying behavior is behavior which can occur on or off school grounds and which can occur through electronic means (email, internet, cell phones, texting, etc.). EWSD schools will take appropriate steps to respond to bullying behavior that takes place off school grounds as it affects the school environment or substantially interferes with any student's ability to access educational programs at school.

Reporting Bullying: If a student feels they are being bullied, and it is safe to do so, the student may tell that person to stop. Victims and witnesses are asked to report bullying to their grade-level administrator or, if this proves difficult, any teacher or staff member. Students may anonymously report acts of bullying to their teachers and school administrators, or can call the Safe Schools Hotline at 872-5888. Parents/guardians may file written reports of suspected bullying with the school. Any student or parent/guardian of a student who believes they have been a victim of bullying should report the matter immediately to the principal. All EWSD employees are required to advance reports of bullying to their respective administrator or supervisor immediately.

Consequences: Bullying will result in the bully being disciplined. The

disciplinary consequences include the full range of disciplinary consequences outlined in EWSD discipline policies and the school discipline plan (e.g. confiscation of cell phone, denial of internet privileges, detention, loss of privileges, denial of participation in co-curricular activities and sports). Disciplinary consequences may also include a recommendation to the school board for long-term suspension.

To the extent permitted by federal and state confidentiality laws, the school may notify the parent/guardian of the student who is a victim of bullying of the action taken to prevent further acts of bullying. The school will also provide notification to the parents/guardians of the student who commits a verified act of bullying of the school's response and consequences of any further bullying by their child. Law enforcement authorities may be contacted upon verification of acts of bullying. It should be noted that misconduct, while serious, may not meet all the standards of bullying. However, it may be behavior that is subject to the full range of disciplinary actions utilized by the school including, but not limited to, suspension and long-term suspension.

Bullying incidences are subject to report requirements of the Vermont Secretary of Education. All EWSD schools will collect data on the number of reported and verified incidents of bullying. For more information on the bullying, please see policy C10 on the EWSD website.

- **Harassment:** All EWSD schools should be educational settings where students are free from harassment. EWSD schools are committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. We support and value tolerance and responsibility, and expect students to treat each other and with respect.

Harassment will not be tolerated in EWSD schools, and any student who participates in the harassment of another individual or group while at school or attending a school-sponsored activity will be subject to the full range of disciplinary actions utilized by the school. This includes, but is not limited to: detention, loss of co-curricular privileges, suspension, and/or long-term suspension. Please note that harassment is behavior which can occur on and off school grounds. EWSD schools will take appropriate steps to respond to harassment that takes place off school grounds, provided it has a nexus to the

school environment, and where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

Definitions and Examples: As it relates to students and the schools, "Harassment" means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment can also include conduct such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of the student's education, or submission or rejection of the conduct is used as a component for decisions affecting the student.

Harassment can also include conduct directed at the characteristics of the student's or their family's actual or perceived race or color, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. It can include the use of stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display or circulation of written or visual material and taunts on the manner of a student's speech or negative references to racial customs.

Examples of harassment based on or motivated on the characteristics outlined above can include:

1. Verbal: Foul, racist, offensive, or demeaning language; persistent teasing, offensive or degrading jokes or comments; embarrassing someone with comments or cracks, making fun of the way someone talks or looks, using degrading words to describe someone; repeatedly flirting with someone who's not interested, participating in gossip, passing rumors or threats, etc.
2. Non-Verbal: Gestures, graffiti or pictures on books, lockers, hats,

clothing; suggestive, obscene or insulting sounds, whistling, leering; sexually suggestive objects, notes, or other writings of a teasing, insulting, racist or otherwise offensive nature; displays of obscene or sexually explicit materials.

3. Physical: Unwanted contact which may include: touching, pinching, pushing, hitting or brushing up against someone's body. Unwanted contact could also constitute assault and involve the police and DCF.
4. Electronic Means: Includes harassing conduct which occurs via the internet or cell phone, such as email communication(s), web postings, voice mail(s), and texting.

Reporting Harassment: If a student feels that they are being harassed, and it is safe to do so, the student may tell that person to stop. Victims and witnesses are asked to report harassment to their grade-level administrator, or if this proves difficult, any teacher or staff member. Any student or parent/guardian of a student who believes they have been the victim of harassment should report the matter immediately to the principal.

Administrative Procedures: EWSD schools receiving notice of alleged conduct constituting harassment will promptly investigate the matter. After receiving actual notice (a written complaint or oral information that harassment may have occurred), the school official will provide the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator (or their parents/guardians if under the age of 18) with a copy of the EWSD policy and procedure. The school official shall promptly initiate an investigation of the complaint no later than one school day from the filing of the complaint. The determination should be completed no later than five days from the filing of the complaint with the designated person (unless special circumstances exist).

If harassment is found to have occurred, the school will take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop it. The privacy of the complainant, accused individual(s), and witnesses shall be maintained. If either the complainant or the alleged individual is under the age of 18, subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information, the complainant and the accused individual shall be informed in writing of the results.

EWSD schools also provide students with the opportunity to have an independent review of the final determination of the school or the school's response to the documented harassment.

Consequences for Harassment: Documented acts of harassment will result in the perpetrator being disciplined. The disciplinary consequences include the full range of disciplinary consequences outlined in the EWSD student discipline policies and school discipline plan. These include, but are not limited to: after-school detention, loss of privileges, loss of ability to participate in after-school and co-curricular activities, mandatory remedial classes, parent/guardian conferences, and suspension. Disciplinary consequences may also include a recommendation to the school board for long-term suspension. The school will provide notice to the parents/guardians and complainant of the results of the investigation. The school will also provide clear notification to the parents/guardians of the student who commits a verified act of harassment of the school's response and consequences of any further harassment by their child. Law enforcement may be contacted upon verification of acts of harassment.

At all stages of the investigation and determination process, alternative dispute resolution methods such as mediation are available to the complainant to resolve the complaint.

It should be noted that some misconduct, while serious, may not meet all the standards of harassment. However, EWSD schools may respond to such behavior in an appropriate manner to prevent misconduct from escalating to harassment. Therefore, it may be behavior that is subject to the full range of disciplinary actions utilized by the school, including, but not limited to suspension and long-term suspension.

Harassment incidences are subject to reporting requirements of the VT Secretary of Education. All EWSD schools will collect data on the number of reported and verified incidences of harassment. For more information on the harassment, please see policy C10 on the EWSD site.

Hazing: Hazing means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student:

In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and

- (1) Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, co-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

- (1) The goals are approved by the educational institution; and
- (2) The activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

Reporting Procedures:

1. Any person who believes they have been the victim of hazing, or any person with knowledge or evidence of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to a school administrator, coach or the superintendent.
2. The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to a school administrator or to the superintendent.
3. Teachers, administrators, volunteers, contractors, coaches, or other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events which might include hazing. Any such person who receives knowledge or evidence of conduct which may constitute hazing shall inform the building principal.
4. The school district will take appropriate action against any student, volunteer, contractor, or employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to: any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

Consequences: The building administrator (or designee), in accordance with established policy, procedures, and school rules, is responsible for managing student discipline in cases of hazing. Discipline and consequences will be at the discretion of the building administrator (or designee) after consultation with the superintendent. A range of disciplinary consequences including warning, suspension, exclusion from co- or extra-curricular opportunities, revocation of non-curricular privileges (i.e. parking, attendance at events, etc.), or long-term suspension may be applied. Repeat offenders should expect increasingly severe penalties.

In cases of student athletes, consequences for hazing violations may range from individual suspension from participation in athletic programs for a period of time to cancellation of an athletic schedule, depending on the magnitude of the incident and the number of athletes involved. Consequences for athletic hazing violations brought to the attention of the administration after-the-season may include restriction on subsequent athletic eligibility, revocation, or denial of athletic letter awards, and/or athletic probation.

Students having knowledge of the planning or occurrence of a specific hazing activity, and who fail to report it to the required officials as noted previously may be subject to discipline involving loss of non-curricular privileges.

Potentially illegal acts will be brought to the attention of law enforcement. For more information on the hazing, please see policy C10 on the EWSD site.

- **Responsible Computer, Network, and Internet Use Policy:** Internet access is available to students and educators across the EWSD. EWSD believes access to the internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to educators and students is to promote educational excellence in our schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The network relies upon proper conduct of end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided so the user is aware of the required responsibilities. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources.

If a user within EWSD violates any of these provisions, their account may be suspended, and future access could possibly be denied. Further disciplinary

measures may also be taken. An Electronic Information Resource Agreement between EWSD and the user will be provided to students in grade four and to newly registered students, indicating the user who signed has carefully read the terms and conditions, and understands its significance. This agreement is maintained in each student's file.

Terms and Conditions: These policies shall apply to:

- Users of electronic information resources which are utilized with equipment located or accessed in the district
- Users who obtain their access privileges through association with the district

Personal Responsibility: I will accept responsibility in reporting misuse of the network to the System Administrator or a school principal. Misuse can come in many forms, but it is commonly viewed as any material sent or received indicating or suggesting pornography, unethical or illegal behavior, racism, sexism, inappropriate language, or violation or other issues described below.

Responsible Use Guidelines:

- I agree that the use of electronic information resources must be in support of education, research, and the educational goals and objectives of the district.
- I agree not to submit, publish, display, or retrieve any defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, illegal material other than for educational purposes as approved by a district educator.
- I will protect my own and others' information. I will not reveal others' personal address or phone numbers.
- I will lock or log off my device when I am not using it.
- I understand that email is not private.
- I will not use the network in any way that would disrupt the use of the network by others.
- I understand that many services and products are available for free and acknowledge that I am responsible for any expenses incurred (such as online buying, research fees, etc.).
- I will not use the network for commercial purposes.

- I will follow the rules of the District's Discipline and Required Student Behavior policy while using electronic information resources.
- I will not attempt to harm, modify, or destroy hardware or software, or interfere with system security.
- I will use a password that has at least one special character, is not a word that can be found in the dictionary and is at least six characters long.
- I agree not to bypass the district's internet filter by using a proxy site, web browser plugin, or any other method.
- I agree not to intentionally hide, obscure, mask or encrypt data on the network.
- I agree not to connect district owned wireless devices to mobile hotspots on school property.
- I agree to not lock district owned devices by putting passwords on them or enabling lock screens.
- I agree to remove my unwanted or unused files regularly.
- I will not use, or attempt to use, others' electronic passwords or account information.
- Online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration used face-to-face. Any speech that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online. This includes, but is not limited to: profanity; racist, sexist or discriminatory remarks; and personal attacks. All EWSD policies and procedures are relevant when using social media.
- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines. Refer to the U.S. Copyright Office (www.copyright.gov), along with Fair Use and EWSD Copyright Policy and Handbook and references.
- Be sure to familiarize yourself with all Terms and Conditions prior to using any online services including age requirements.

Services:

- The district reserves the right to log the use of all systems and monitor file server and cloud space utilization.
- The building administrator is authorized to close an account at any time through the System Administrator, whose decision may be appealed to the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent is

final.

- The district is not responsible for any service interruptions, changes, or consequences arising there from, even if these arise from circumstances under the control of the district.
- The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied. Service is provided on an “as is, as available” basis.
- The district reserves the right to establish rules and regulations as may be necessary to maintain the operation of the electronic information systems.

Consequences:

- Infractions of the provisions set forth in this Agreement may result in the suspension or termination of access privileges and/or appropriate disciplinary action.
 - Activities in violation of state and federal statutes will be subject to prosecution by those authorities. Disciplinary action may be taken by the district as appropriate.
 - The administration, faculty, and staff of the district may request the System Administrator to deny specific user accounts due to inappropriate use.
- **Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco; Weapons; Assault/Fighting:** EWSD is committed to maintaining a safe, positive learning environment free of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons and assault/fighting: Students are expected to avoid any action that may endanger themselves or others. Students and adults are expected to attend school and school-related events free of the influence of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol. The use or possession of alcohol, drugs, and /or tobacco products is prohibited on school grounds, or during school activities (refer to “Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco listed under A below). Students must not carry or possess (openly or concealed) any type of weapon on school grounds or at a school activity (refer to “Weapons” listed under ‘B’ below). Students are expected to treat each other and staff with respect (refer to “Assault/fighting listed under C below).
- A. **Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco:** EWSD upholds a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free environment. The possession, use, or sale of tobacco, alcohol, and/or drugs is prohibited. Please refer to EWSD Policy C2: Alcohol and Drugs

Definition: The term “drug” is defined as a mood-altering substance to include, but not be limited to, the following categories: tobacco and nicotine products (including electronic cigarettes and vaporizers), illegal drugs and substances, inhalants, controlled drugs, prescription medication, and alcohol.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program: In keeping with Title 16, VSA sections 1165 and 909, and other state and federal regulations, the School Board supports a comprehensive program which includes at least the following components: education/prevention programming and staff training; support and referral systems and cooperative agreements; immediate and emergency procedures; possession, use, and/or distribution intervention; performance and behavior-related interventions; and community awareness programming.

- Education/Prevention Programming: EWSD has implemented a well-developed sequential tobacco, alcohol, and drug abuse prevention education curriculum for elementary and secondary schools.
- Support and Referral Systems and Cooperative Agreements: Each school within the district has an in-school process for initial assessment, support, and, if necessary, referral to community resources for students affected by their own or another’s drug use.
- Immediate Procedures: Emphasis shall be placed on the welfare and rights of the individual to the extent such consideration does not jeopardize the welfare and rights of others. With regard to students, in-school procedures shall provide for an immediate response to any drug-related incident until the student has been discharged to the parent, guardian, social services, medical, or law enforcement agency. As part of school procedure, the administration shall be immediately informed by school staff of any violation of the law and/or school policy. The administration shall follow the appropriate legal procedures and due process for discipline.
- Emergency Procedures: In the event of an emergency involving alcohol or drug abuse, every precaution must be taken to protect the person’s health and well-being while protecting the health and well-being of the remaining school population.
- Possession, Use, or Distribution Consequences/Interventions: Any student discovered in a school building, on school property, or at a school-sanctioned activity, having possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia, using or distributing drugs, or knowingly and willfully

assisting another person in using or distributing drugs shall be disciplined with established school policy and procedure. The matter shall be referred to the police as necessary. Students found to be in violation of district policies, including drug, alcohol, and tobacco policies, will have their parking privileges revoked and will lose the opportunity to participate in campus-sponsored Drivers Education classes.

- **Performance and Behavior-Related Problems:** According to school procedures, a minimum of two staff persons shall be designated for consultation regarding a student whose behavior or performance may indicate a problem with alcohol or other drug use. These staff persons shall assist the determination of need for further screening, education, and counseling in referral to treatment.

Employees of the supervisory union (including contractors and drivers) shall report incidents and/or behavior of students, other employees, or visitors who display evidence of impairment. Employees shall report incidents to the principal (or designee) or the superintendent.

When a student is determined to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, they shall be discharged to a parent, guardian, social service, medical, or law enforcement agency.

Following appropriate consultation and deliberation, the parent or guardian of any student suspected of being under the influence of drugs shall be notified by school authorities. A course of action leading toward the determination of facts, and, if necessary, toward the treatment and rehabilitation of said student, shall be jointly considered by school authorities.

- **Follow-Up Procedures:** It is recognized retaining or returning persons to the school setting is desirable whenever such action is consistent with the individual's own rehabilitation and well-being, and whenever such action does not interfere with the learning process for students and the maintenance of discipline and safety. Students may be required to seek professional guidance/rehabilitation as a condition of enrollment/re-enrollment in school or other alternative education

program provided by the district.

- **Prescription Drugs and Other Medication:** Any student who must take medication during the regular school day shall do so in accordance with the district procedure concerning the administration of medications. Also, see the health services section of this handbook.
- **Community Involvement:** EWSD shall provide for a program to inform the community about alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, intervention and education programs, and community-wide responsibility for effective alcohol and drug abuse prevention.

Discipline Procedures for Alcohol, Drug Use, and/or Possession:

Below is an excerpt from EWSD Policy C2: Alcohol and Drugs. Substance Abuse is the use of any drugs and/or alcohol in such a way that it interferes with a person's ability to perform physically, intellectually, emotionally, or socially. Drug means any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance as defined by state or federal regulation or statute.

- **First Offense**
 1. Parents/guardians will be notified and the student sent home for the remainder of the day. The student must be picked up by a parent/guardian, social services, medical, or law enforcement agency.
 2. Notification under Emergency Conditions: if, in the opinion of the principal (or designee), an emergency situation exists, an area rescue squad and/or the local police will be called. The parent/guardian will be notified prior to such action when possible, and in all other instances as soon as possible thereafter.
 3. Suspension for up to 10 days. Notification of Police: the principal or designee will notify the Essex Police Department in any instances of suspected or actual alcohol or drug use, possession, or distribution that would violate state laws.
 4. Upon re-entry to school, the student, parent/guardian must meet with an administrator, the school's Substance Abuse Provider (if available), and show evidence of an appointment with a substance abuse counseling program. The student must comply with the counseling program's treatment recommendations.
 5. Exclusion for 90 days from co- and extra-curricular activities.

This applies to events sponsored by the school regardless of location. This can be modified to 30 days upon complying with recommendations from an outside counseling agency and in conjunction with the school SAP.

6. While out of school, students are expected and responsible for all school related tasks. It is the student's responsibility to contact their teachers and make appropriate plans for completion of assignments; students are encouraged to use the school website and/or email system.

- **Second Offense - all of the above and:**

1. 10 days out-of-school suspension

- **Third Offense - all of the above and:**

1. Minimum 10 days out-of-school suspension
2. Further disciplinary action, up to and including: long-term suspension shall be recommended to the EWSD Superintendent

CTE Program Specific Drug Testing Procedures: If there is reasonable suspicion a student is under the influence of, or in possession of, drug paraphernalia, the student will immediately be sent to the administrative office (nurse's office if it appears to be a medical issue). In addition to any disciplinary consequences, the following will be followed:

1. The day the student is referred to an administrator, they are required to provide a urine sample for drug screening at a clinic utilized by the school for this purpose. Until results are received, the student may not use tools or equipment, or be placed in situations wherein injury to self or others may occur. Programs at school where such tools, equipment, or situations are present include: Apprenticeships; paid work experiences; Auto Tech I and II; Building Tech I and II; Childhood Education/Human Services I and II; Cosmetology I, II and III; Dental Assisting I and II; Driver Education; Graphic Design/Digital Publishing I and II; Natural Resources I and II; Pre-Tech; and Pro Foods I and II.
2. In all school programs, a student shall not be placed on a paid or unpaid experience, and shall not be recommended for employment until/unless drug screening results are negative.
3. If screening results are positive, tainted, or diluted, the student must agree to cease use of drugs and submit to additional drug screening

to document the cessation of drug use until a negative drug screen is obtained.

4. Drug screening results must be negative and remain negative for the student to continue in the program.
5. Additional random drug screening may be required.
6. A second positive, tainted, or diluted drug screen shall result in a meeting with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to review program placement.

Refusal to agree to drug screening shall result in removal from the program.

Discipline Procedures for Alcohol, Drug Sale, and/or Distribution:

The following procedures will apply when a student is found selling and/or distributing alcohol or other drugs on school property or at school-sponsored activities, and will accrue during the entire school career of the student. School property includes all school buildings, athletic fields, and parking areas. School-sponsored activities include all athletic and co- and extra-curricular activities and events, regardless of location.

- **First Offense**

1. 10 day suspension from school
2. Parent/guardian/law enforcement notification. The principal may recommend long-term suspension to the school board.
3. If the student returns to school, all policies relating to drug use and/or possession First Offense also apply.

- **Second Offense**

1. Suspension and recommendation for long-term suspension. The student will be suspended or placed in an alternative educational setting until the school board makes a decision on long-term suspension.
2. Police notification
3. Parent/guardian conference

If the student returns to school, all drug use and/or possession Second Offense procedures apply.

Participants in athletics and co-curricular activities will face additional consequences as outlined in the school's athletic eligibility, rules, and will be referred to the Athletic Director and/or activity advisor or coach.

Discipline Procedures for Tobacco Use and/or Possession: In addition to the EWSD policy on Possession and Use of Tobacco Products, the following apply when a student is found in violation of the policy:

- Time in planning room, time-out, or in-school suspension
- Notification of parents/guardians
- Notification of law enforcement (if appropriate)
- Referral to appropriate school personnel
- Repeat offenders will be subject to suspension

Participants in athletics and co-curricular activities will face additional consequences as outlined in the school's athletic eligibility, rules, and will be referred to the Athletic Director and/or activity advisor or coach.

- B. **Weapons:** EWSD will comply with federal and state laws in regarding the prohibition of weapons on campus, requiring school districts to provide for the possible long-term suspension of student who bring weapons to school.

Definitions:

- "To school" means any setting under control and supervision of the school district, including school grounds, facilities, and vehicles used to transport students to/from school or school activities. Students are not permitted to carry or possess (openly or concealed) any type of weapon, or facsimile or replica of a weapon, on school grounds.
- "Weapons" may include: any type of firearm, knife, brass knuckles, rifle, and any object which could be used to inflict serious injury.
- Mace, pepper spray, or other personal defense items are not permitted on school property.
- Weapons may not be left in any vehicle as well.

No knives of any length are acceptable on school property. Technical program students will be provided with all appropriate tools. These tools shall remain in the lab, shop, or work-site, and are not to be brought to school, in the possession of a student during breaks, or carried home.

Consequences: Any student who brings a weapon to school may be brought by the superintendent to the school board for a hearing. Any student who brings a firearm to school shall be brought by the Superintendent to the school

board for a long term suspension hearing. The board may modify the long-term suspension on a case-by-case basis when it finds certain circumstances exist. In addition, any student who brings a weapon to school shall be referred to a law enforcement agency.

- C. **Assault/fighting:** Assaulting and threatening behavior, including fighting or physical aggression, of any type on school premises or at any school function regardless of location will not be tolerated.

Consequences: Any student found in a school building, on school property, or at a school-sanctioned activity engaging in assault, threatening behavior, or physical aggression of any type shall be disciplined with established school policy and procedure. The matter shall be referred to police as necessary.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to hand in their own work appropriately citing the ideas of others. Students are also expected to take care that their behavior in testing situations is open and honest, and no assistance is provided to other students in testing. Students must use only approved aids in classroom, lab, testing, and performance situations. There shall be no academic dishonesty such as cheating, violation of copyright protection, willful plagiarism, or misrepresentation in any way of one's work.

Definitions:

- "Cheating" is defined as using someone else's work as your own, violating the conditions of the assignment, giving another student questions or answers from a test already taken, or speaking or using electronic messaging with someone during a test or quiz.
- "Plagiarism" is defined as the presentation of another's work - the ideas, arguments, facts, or phraseology - as one's own work. Unacknowledged quotation of another's sentences, phrases, or keywords is plagiarism. Unacknowledged paraphrasing of someone else's ideas or arguments is plagiarism. Using papers (in whole or in part) from the internet as one's own work is plagiarism.

Consequences: A first offense will result in the student receiving a zero on the assignment, with notification to teachers and parents/guardians. A meeting will be held involving the student, parents/guardians, teacher, guidance counselor, and appropriate school administrator.

Subsequent offenses may result in the loss of credit for class(es) in which the offense(s) occurs, and/or possible retention. The appropriate school administrator will meet with the student and parent/guardian to inform the parties of the loss of credit, to review its impact on the student's academic performance, and to reassert the school's academic honesty expectations.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Please refer to the athletic eligibility rules at your student's school for specific information on rules pertaining to co-curricular activity preparation, academic eligibility, attendance requirements, and locker room rules.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

The Essex Westford School District supports student learning through high quality instruction, intervention and assessment and supports individual learning towards meeting required state standards in:

- literacy
- mathematical content and practices
- scientific inquiry and content knowledge
- global citizenship (including social studies and world languages)
- physical education
- health education
- artistic expression (including visual, media and performing arts)
- transferable skills

The schools of the Essex Westford School District use multiple types of assessments to evaluate student learning including assessments, portfolios, projects, performances and exhibitions. These measures include formative assessments, which are designed to provide an opportunity for students to practice learning and which inform the teacher's instruction, and summative assessments, which are designed to evaluate the student's mastery of specific learning goals.

The Essex Westford School District Comprehensive Assessment Plan includes those state and local assessments that are required at each grade level. The Comprehensive Assessment Plan is continually changing over time to include changes in state and local assessment.

For the most recent updates on curriculum and assessment please visit the EWSD website.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Vermont's Flexible Pathways Act (Act 77) provides high school students who are Vermont state residents the opportunity to use two college course vouchers during their junior or senior years in high school. Students may apply for a voucher for the semester they wish to enroll in a dual enrollment course. The voucher covers the cost of tuition for a course of up to four credits at any participating Vermont college. The voucher does NOT cover the cost of materials, textbooks, or transportation. Dual enrollment courses provide both high school and college credit when successfully completed. Interested students should meet with their school counselor. For more information, please go to www.vtdualenrollment.org

Early College: Early College is a full-year alternative to the senior year of high school. Students take courses in college, completing their senior year of high school and their freshman year of college simultaneously, tuition-free. For more information please contact your EHS School Counselor and go to education.vermont.gov/flexible-pathways/early-college. You can find information about one example of a science and technology-focused Early College program here: <http://www.vtc.edu/vast-faqs>

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (EST/504/IDEA)

Educational supports appropriate to the developmental level of students in a school are available to meet the needs of a variety of learning styles. It is EWSD policy to comply with state and federal laws concerning Act 117, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Special Education. Act 117 requires all schools to maintain a comprehensive system of educational supports and services resulting, to the maximum extent possible, in all students succeeding in the regular classroom.

As such, our schools will ensure a range of effective educational supports and services will be available to all students. This includes special education services to those children who meet the eligibility criteria established by the rules and regulations of Vermont. A parent/guardian with concerns about their child's academic development should consult with the student's teacher to initiate access to educational supports and services.

For more information on related policies, please refer to www.ewsd.org or contact your building principal or one of the Co-Directors of Student Support Services at 878-8168.

Educational Support Teams (EST): EST is in place to review concerns and needs of students in order to support their success. There are different levels of educational support and service available for students. Should a parent/guardian have a concern regarding student academic performance or behavior, they should contact the student's classroom teacher. Parent/guardian concerns may be referred to the EST. Teachers may refer students to the EST as well. EST meetings allow teachers to work collaboratively to meet the needs of students and to establish follow-up procedures.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices are prevalent in today's society. It is important these devices be used to enhance learning, and not take away from learning occurring in the classroom. As such, the following apply in all EWSD schools:

- Students may use electronic devices in designated areas. The use of camera functions is strictly prohibited.
- Electronic devices may be used in academic classrooms at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Any electronic device brought to school must be the responsibility of the student, and the school is not liable for safe-keeping. Students are expected to use electronic devices respectfully. If a student fails to do so, they will be asked to relinquish the device to school personnel. The device shall be returned to the student/parent/guardian at the end of the school day. Any student who fails to relinquish an electronic device shall be considered insubordinate and disciplinary actions can occur.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

We utilize an automated emergency notification system in the event of a school closing (due to weather or an emergency), which relies on the most up-to-date information you provide. Please notify each student's school if any contact information changes (including home/cell work phone, email, addresses, etc.).

School Closings: In the event of school closings, parents/guardians, students and employees shall be informed through radio and television stations, and by our emergency notification system. For a complete list of radio and television stations, visit www.vab.org/stations.htm, or contact the EWSD Central Office (857-2000). In addition, all school closing information will be posted to the EWSD website (www.ewsd.org) and on all school sites.

School closing notification is listed by school and posted as close to 6:00 a.m. as possible. If school is closed, all daytime and evening school activities, programs, and events are also cancelled, and notification will be posted online. Radio stations will be notified by 1:00 p.m. if evening adult classes and programs at CTE will also be cancelled.

Closings after school has started: If school must be closed before dismissal time, due to weather or other circumstances, announcements of the revised closing time will be made using the automated notification system, local radio/television stations, and the EWSD/school websites. If students need to be dismissed before the end of the school day, parents/guardians need to have an alternative plan in place and should communicate that plan to both their student and the school, with respect to who is authorized to pick up their child or who will be home to greet them. Generally, schools follow one of two alternatives:

- Students are dismissed (and transported if applicable), or
- Students are kept at school or at an alternative site (if the building is evacuated) until a parent/guardian arrives.

At the preK-3 level, schools will not send students home without first having confirmed this is the desire of the parents/guardians. At the grades 4-12 level, schools will follow the first alternative and dismiss the students, unless told to do otherwise by the parent/guardian. If the parents/guardians are transporting their student home, they should arrive in a timely fashion.

In most emergencies, students will remain and be cared for at the school. In the rare event an emergency prohibits use of the buildings, or re-entry to the building (such as a broken gas or water main, a fire, or toxic chemical spill), students will be transported via school transportation or walked to an evacuation site.

During a school emergency, we ask parents/guardians to:

- Monitor your telephone and email: We will utilize an automated notification system to inform you of the emergency and provide guidance.
- Turn on your radio or television and go online: We will keep the media informed of any emergency. Check our web-site (www.ewsd.org) often for updates.
- Please do not telephone the school: We have limited phone lines and they must be used to respond to the emergency.
- Please do not come to the school unless requested to pick up your student:

Any emergency may require emergency vehicles, workers, and/or law enforcement to have access to/from the building. During such a time, parents/guardians will be restricted from accessing school grounds. If the emergency necessitates relocation of staff and students, parents/guardians will be informed via the media and web-site. Parent/guardian identification may be required to dismiss a student. To dismiss a student to any adult other than the parent/guardian will require written permission from the student's parent/guardian.

School Safety Drills: School safety drills are conducted monthly during the school year. The various procedures for these drills will be reviewed by teachers and students. There is a Crisis Response Plan posted in each room of the school. When a drill is announced, all students are required to follow planned procedures in an orderly fashion. Students must stay with their class (or assigned group) so teachers can check attendance.

FIELD TRIPS

School trips are an extension of educational programs, and all school rules and policies apply. Before a trip, parents/guardians will receive written notice containing all pertinent details necessary for a successful experience. Parent/guardian permission is required for a student to participate in a school trip. Students must use transportation arranged for the trip by the school.

Walking trips and other nearby activities are considered a regular part of the school program. Extended and overnight trips may require students and chaperones to complete participant contracts.

Parents or others providing transportation for field studies must have the required state minimum liability insurance and be aware that their insurance is responsible for the primary liability.

Field trips mandated by District curriculum and approved by the building principal will be paid for by the District. No fees may be charged as a prerequisite to participation in such field studies.

Non-curriculum mandated field studies may be approved by the building principal and funded in part or whole by participating students, fund raising activities or school funds.

GUARDIANSHIP AND PARENTAL RIGHTS

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to provide documentation of legal decisions that effect custody or parental rights with regard to a student. If there are any changes in family or custody status that affect access to a student, student records, or residency, please notify the school immediately.

HEALTH SERVICES

School nurses support student success by striving to remove health-related barriers to learning. Through health education and health care, the school nurse fosters an environment that promotes health, safety, and the well-being of every student and the school community.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends an annual well child exam (which includes a physical) with your pediatrician for all children. EWSD supports this recommendation and supports all students seeing their doctor annually for this purpose.

Acute Illness: Students who are ill should not be in school. Illness includes, but is not limited to: vomiting, diarrhea, fever, persistent coughing or sneezing, and unexplained rashes. Parents/guardians should contact the school in the morning if their student will not be attending school due to illness. Students who become ill during the school day should report to the Health Office for evaluation. The Health Services Provider/School Nurse will assess the illness and contact parents/guardians as necessary. Students cannot leave without being released by either the Health Office or Main Office staff once the staff has contacted the parent/guardian or emergency designee. Parents/guardians/emergency designee are expected to make transportation arrangements for students released from the Health Office. Parents/guardians are asked to pick up their sick child as soon as possible.

Chronic Illness or Life-Threatening Allergy: Chronic illnesses and life-threatening allergies, such as food allergies, are a common yet serious condition. EWSD schools are committed to the requirements of Vermont's Act 158: An Act Relating to Life Threatening Chronic Allergies and Illnesses in Schools, and the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. To that end, all EWSD schools are prepared to offer safe and supportive environment accommodation for such conditions in a nondiscriminatory manner, enabling each student to meaningfully participate in school activities, including curricular and co-curricular programs, meals, and recess. EWSD maintains school

guidelines for managing students with life-threatening allergies and chronic illness, which include family, school, and student responsibilities. Prior to entry into school (or, for a student already in school, immediately after the diagnosis of a life-threatening allergic reaction), please notify the school administrator and/or school nurse to determine whether your student is eligible for protection under Section 504 due to life-threatening allergy or chronic illness. If your student has a food allergy or other chronic, life-threatening allergy or illness, it is your responsibility to inform the school of the condition so we may develop a plan to ensure your student's safety in school activities. Whether or not it is determined that your student has a disabling condition and is eligible for protection under Section 504, an individualized healthcare plan will be developed to ensure that appropriate supports to address the student's needs are provided, including during meal times for food allergies. Documentation of the chronic or life-threatening condition or allergy may be necessary in order for the school to evaluate the condition and to develop a plan, if necessary. A copy of the school procedures used by the school in these circumstances is available for parents/guardians and students.

Immunizations: Adequate proof of immunizations required by the State of Vermont must be on file in the School Health Office before the student starts school. Failure to comply with these State regulations will result in exclusion from school until the requirements are met. Requests for medical exemption must be signed by the physician. Parent/guardian educational materials and all necessary forms are available on the VT Department of Health's website: www.healthvermont.gov.

Injuries: Accidents can happen in school buildings, on field studies, in school buses, and on school grounds. All serious injuries occurring during regular school hours will be reported to the School Nurse for evaluation and referral to outside medical care as necessary. An accident report will be filed on all serious injuries. School personnel may need to arrange for immediate transport to a health care facility in serious cases of illness or injury. Parents/guardians, or emergency designee, will be contacted. In the case of emergency, 9-1-1 will be called and the parent/guardian, or emergency designee, will be contacted as soon as possible.

Nits and Head Lice: EWSD recognizes Pediculosis (head lice) is a common challenge for families and agencies dealing with students. While lice cannot be completely eliminated, EWSD encourages cooperative measures within the school community to control for lice and nits. EWSD emphasizes keeping students in school rather than sending them home when a health assessment advises this to be appropriate, risking unnecessary loss of school time. EWSD practice is based on VT Department of Health recommendations, which

states that children should be allowed to return to school after proper treatment, and should not be prevented from returning to school because of the presence of nits. It is the practice of EWSD member school districts to prevent, monitor, and manage outbreaks of head lice at the school level.

Non-Prescription Medication: School Health Office personnel administer non-prescription medication. A parent/guardian must complete and sign a Health Information Form yearly, and may indicate preference for their student to receive over-the-counter medications for the duration of each school year. Students may not carry any type of non prescription medication including but not limited to: ibuprofen, acetaminophen, cold/cough medicine of any type.

Prescription Medication: Prescription medications may be administered by district health personnel only when the following state regulations are complied with:

Before the medication can be given, School Health Office personnel must have written orders from a physician detailing the name of the student, the drug dosage, and the time the medication is to be given. School Health Office personnel must have written permission from the student's parent/guardian. The parent/guardian must bring the medication to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. All medications must be kept in the school health office in a locked cabinet. School Health Office personnel must administer all medications. Student may not carry any prescription medicine of any type on their person.

If the above requirements are not met, health personnel will immediately contact parents/guardians to inform them of the district's requirements. Any modification to the above must be discussed and approved by School Health Office personnel.

IDENTIFICATION (ID) BADGES

Student identification (ID) will be provided to all EHS/CTE students. Badges are to be used for admittance to school activities and events (such as dances, sporting competitions, etc.), for library use, or for security reasons. Students are required to identify themselves upon request, and failure to do so will lead to an administrative response.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

No student shall, at any time during the day, leave the school grounds without permission from the main office or nurse's office. Students who leave campus without permission

will be listed as off school grounds with an unauthorized absence (commonly referred to as “skipping”). Parents/guardians will be notified and an administrative response will occur.

LOCKERS

1. Lockers are the property of school and may be opened by school personnel. Students should not have any expectation of privacy in lockers.
2. Use of school lockers shall be consistent with school rules and EWSD policies. Unsafe or unsanitary conditions will result in loss of locker privileges.
3. Only non-permanent decorations are allowed on the inside of the locker.
4. Students should not share locker combinations to ensure that personal belongings are safe and secure.
5. Any problems relating to lockers should be reported to the main office.
6. The school is not responsible for personal belongings left in the locker room, outside of the lockers, or in the gym.

Label all personal belongings. Each year, many valuable items with no labels go unclaimed. If not claimed within a reasonable period of time, these items - regardless of value - are donated to charity.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

EWSD and its member school districts are not responsible for lost/stolen property. Should an item be missing, students are encouraged to check the school's Lost and Found. Each school has a container for Lost and Found items where students and parents/guardians can check for lost items. Items lost on school buses are sent to the individual schools. Lost money and unique or expensive items such as jewelry, eyeglasses, and watches are held by office staff or safety officer.

POSTERS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND/OR DISPLAYS

Posters, announcements, and/or displays may be exhibited in the school for school-related events. Distribution of non-school-related materials is prohibited.

At the principal's discretion, announcements for non-school events for students may be posted for a set amount of time in a designated areas of the school. At the principal's discretion, literature for non-school-related events may be kept at the school office (or designated area) for students/parents/guardians to access.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

The purpose of progress reports and report cards is to communicate a student's progress in meeting standards or proficiencies as well as how the student is demonstrating the learning habits that support student achievement, and to identify areas of strength and areas where improvements may be needed. The schools of the Essex Westford District use a variety of different forms of standards-based or proficiency-based reporting tools. This type of progress report/report card benefits students, teachers and parents/guardians by:

- Providing more transparency through increased information about how a student is progressing towards meeting standards;
- Allowing students to be more informed and actively engaged in their learning;
- Ensuring increased consistency across classrooms
- Providing parents/guardians with a more detailed information about grade level proficiencies.

For the most recent updates on progress reports and report cards please visit the EWSD website.

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

EWSD and its schools encourage open communications. Should a concern arise, students and parents/guardians are asked to first communicate directly with the staff member involved. Should a resolution not occur, or prove to be unsatisfactory, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the principal to discuss the concern. If the concern is unable to be resolved at the school level, parents/guardians should contact the Superintendent's Office.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

All citizens are welcome to attend school board meetings. A schedule of meetings can be found at www.ewsd.org. School board agendas are posted in: schools, libraries, municipal offices, and the EWSD Central Offices. Minutes, agendas, and much more can be found on the school boards' website. Regular meetings are also filmed (and posted online) by RETN and LCATV on a rotating basis.

SCHOOL CHOICE

School choice refers to the educational alternatives available to parents/guardians who do not wish to send their children to the local district public schools to which they are

assigned. All children are different with different needs and different talents. School choice programs allow parents or guardians to seek out the best and most appropriate educational opportunities for their children without financial penalty. Students, from Essex Town, Essex Junction or Westford, interested in attending other area high schools, beginning in the fall of 2016, need to complete and submit a School Choice Application form by March 1. Completed applications should be submitted to the EHS School Counseling Office. Each year limited spots are available for each grade level. A lottery will be held if more applications are received than there are slots available. Students will be informed by April 1 of school choice decisions. Students selected for school choice need to inform the residence school, in writing, of their decision by April 15. Decisions will be communicated to receiving schools right away.

The EWSD Board has established the following caps: Essex High School will receive no more than 20 students for the 2017-2018 school year. No more than 10 resident students will be allowed to attend other area high schools under the provisions of this law for the 2017-2018 school year.

Transportation for school choice students is the responsibility of the students' families. Students must maintain the expected standards to retain their School Choice slot. For more information on the school choice law, contact the EHS Guidance Department.

SCHOOL DRESS

The dress code reflects our commitment to promote a positive, comfortable learning environment for all, as well as our continued effort to help prepare students for the workforce beyond school. Students should arrive at school, school events, and/or functions dressed appropriately. Please make sure your child(ren) is dressed appropriately for school activities and weather conditions. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their student(s) meet these expectations.

Appropriate attire meets acceptable criteria for hygiene and safety, and does not distract from the learning process. Items with obscene or vulgar terms; messages of hatred, violence, discrimination, sexual innuendo, or that promote the use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco are not permitted.

Any item of clothing deemed by school personnel to be distracting, disruptive, or provocative is also inappropriate as school attire.

CTE School Dress Standard: CTE students are expected to dress appropriately for a professional work environment. Many programs require professional attire or uniforms.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please talk with the building principal.

SCHOOL TEXTS AND PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT

Any student assigned school materials (including “minis,” laptops, and other electronic devices) is responsible for those items. Damage or destruction of school property will result in an administrative response and restitution to the district.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

School authorities may search a student, student lockers, or bookbags. In addition, all automobiles parked in school lots may be subject to search by school officials. They may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in the search. Law enforcement may be notified at the discretion of administration. This applies to any school-related or school-sponsored event, such as school dances and field trips. Examples of unauthorized materials include, but are not limited to: lighters, matches, tobacco products, drugs (illegal and prescription), alcohol, and any type of weapon. For detailed information concerning Search and Seizure, refer to EWSD Policy C21.

SKATEBOARDS

Students may not use skateboards, roller blades, scooters, or Heelies on school property.

TELEPHONES

If you wish to convey a message to a student or teacher during the school day, please call the school’s main number. Voice mail messages may be left for individual teachers. There are phones available for student use. Students need permission from their teacher to access these phones. The office and CTE program phones are for business use.

TITLE I PROGRAMS

Title I is a federally funded program designed to ensure that all children have an opportunity to access a high quality education. The goal of this federal program is to close the achievement gap for all students.

Annual Title I school eligibility is determined by the school’s average poverty rate as determined by student eligibility for Free/Reduced Lunch. Eligibility for Title I services in a school is not dependent on the student’s poverty rate but is determined based on

academic performance and eligibility for intervention services.

For more information about Title I programs and related Title I policies please visit the EWSD website.

TRANSLATION SERVICES

All parents and guardians, including non-native speakers, are entitled to meaningful communication in a language they can understand. The Essex Westford School District provides translation services for families in order to support access to their child's educational program, including parent conferences, special education meetings, truancy hearings, open house events, field trip permission forms, report cards/progress reports and other critical school events and documents. Translation services provided by the school district are limited to only to school-related events and materials.

Translators can provide both oral and written translations depending on the task and the needs of the family. Our translators are able to attend meetings, parent conferences, make phone calls, translate progress reports and any number of things we need so that our EL students and families have equitable access to their child's education. We have several on-call translators as well as a full time Nepali-speaking Liaison Prem Bhattarai. All translators sign a Translator Confidentiality Agreement which ensures that student or family information is kept in strict confidence.

For more information about the EWSD ELL Program or Translation Services please see the EWSD website.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents who are visiting the school or dropping off or picking up children should park in designated areas and drive safely at all times, especially in the parking lot where there is considerable pedestrian traffic. School rules and policies are in effect on school buses to ensure student safety. We ask parents/guardians to cooperate with the school when informed of a problem. For everyone's safety, students must be seated while the bus is in motion, and must be reasonably quiet. The bus driver is responsible for passenger safety and welfare, and is to be obeyed at all times. Students are expected to get on/off the bus in a quiet and orderly manner.

School Bus Procedures: The EWSD Central Office in conjunction with the bus contractor establishes routes and designates stops after considering both the safety of children

and efficiency of operation. This means some students may have to walk to a designated intersection to help all students arrive at school on time. Thank you to the parents, neighbors and older siblings that help keep students safe at bus stops.

The transportation schedule is published on the District website each August. Students should be at bus stops ten minutes before the scheduled arrival time. Buses may be somewhat delayed at times due to traffic, inclement weather, or at the beginning of the school year when routes are first established. When it appears that the bus will be delayed by more than 15 minutes, the district will send a message to the parent's designated phone number and email address, notifying them of the delay and if known, why the bus is running late. This will also be posted on Facebook and twitter. Bus routes can be reviewed by visiting the the district website.

Since many bus routes are near capacity, students must have both parent permission and permission from the school office to ride a different bus. To arrange a routine alternative to bus transportation (for example, if parents wish to provide transportation), please send written notice to the principal.

All students in grades K-12 may be assigned seats by the bus driver. For more information on transportation, go to the the EWSD website and click on the Transportation link.

School Bus Stops: Students are expected to wait and be dropped off at the established bus stop every day unless individual accommodations are approved by the bus company and district. Students are accountable for their behavior while going to and from bus stops and while they are waiting for the bus. Parents are expected to handle any behavior difficulties which may be encountered at bus stops.

School Bus Discipline: The District is responsible for monitoring student behavior while students are on the bus. Students are expected to keep themselves and others safe, to respect other students and to respect the transportation equipment. Students who do not follow the rules on the bus will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to: striking another student; throwing objects; damaging bus seats, putting arms or head out of bus window, inappropriate/disrespectful language, standing in or blocking the aisles, or failure to comply with the bus driver's directions. Parents and/or students will be liable for costs resulting from actions that cause damage.

All buses are equipped with video cameras to ensure that drivers have access to objec-

tive and real-time evidence related to student behavior. Parents will not be allowed to view video recordings based on federal student privacy laws.

Disciplinary Procedure: The bus driver will address the violation of the school bus rule with the student, complete an appropriate form and send it to the building principal and transportation contractor. Based on the infraction, the building Principal, Coordinator of Transportation or designee may speak with the student and advise parents that an infraction has occurred. Depending on the severity or number of infractions, transportation privileges may be suspended for a short period of time or for the remainder of the year. Parents are responsible for arranging alternate transportation for their child if this occurs.

Athletic/Co-Curricular Transportation: Students are required to ride the bus to/from all events for which the school provides transportation. Exceptions for alternative transportation must be requested in writing by the student's parent/guardian, and must be approved by the athletics/activities director or coach/advisor in advance. Only a responsible adult may provide transportation. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted to ride with another student, or drive him/herself to an event. While on the bus, students are expected to adhere to the rules of the bus driver and bus company, and to pick up all trash before exiting the bus. School rules are in effect during all transportation times.

Responsible Pickup and Drop Off: Parents who are visiting the school or dropping off or picking up children should drop off or park in designated areas and drive safely at all times near EWSD schools.

Drivers should obey Vermont's Idling law at all times which states that engines must be turned off when a vehicle is waiting or parked on school grounds.

Students Bused to/from School: Students transported to/from school by bus must comply with safety rules/timetables for pick-up/drop-off. Students are required to be at the bus stop on time. The bus is not required to wait for students. Permission slips are required for any changes to normal drop-off/pick-up points.

Use of Motor Vehicles on School Grounds by Students at EHS/CTE: All motor vehicle safety and parking issues are handled by the School Safety Coordinator's Office. Parent/guardian/student concerns should be addressed to the School Safety Coordinator.

The school district is not responsible for any damage incurred to any motor vehicle while parked on campus.

Driving and parking on school grounds are privileges, not rights. Students who purchase parking permits are expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Students purchase a parking permit and clearly displays it on the vehicle at all times. There is a non-refundable fee of \$85 for each student parking space. Students register on a seniority basis.
2. The school property speed limit shall not exceed 15 mph.
3. Erratic or unsafe driving practices or parking violations could result in loss of parking/driving privileges on school grounds, and/or legal prosecution.
4. All vehicles must use the established roads and must be properly registered with the State of Vermont. All off-road vehicles are prohibited on school grounds.
5. Students are responsible to check for parking/driving updates through the Daily Announcements.
6. Student vehicles are subject to search by school officials if there is reasonable suspicion to believe the vehicle, its passengers, or its contents are violation of school rules or policies. If appropriate, law enforcement will be contacted.

Consequences (EHS/CTE Students): Violations of the guidelines are subject to the disciplinary consequences and enforcement practices including, but not limited to: parking tickets, the boot, towing, suspension of driving privileges, and loss of parking privileges. The school is not responsible for any damages or fines incurred due to a car being towed for violation of parking and driving rules. Students found to be in violation of EWSD parking and motor vehicle rules, and district policies, including drug, alcohol, and tobacco policies, may have their parking privileges revoked.

Visitors: Visitors must park in approved areas and observe all regulations stipulated for students. Students who wish to park a car without a parking permit (for short-term only) on school grounds must obtain permission from the School Safety Coordinator and register the vehicle with him.

VANDALISM

Students who willfully damage or destroy school district property and property of its agents will be held responsible for payment of damages. In addition, criminal charges may apply.

Guidelines and Procedures:

1. Any teacher, employee, student, or public member in a school who witnesses willful damage will attempt to identify those responsible for the damage and will report to the principal immediately.
2. In case of damage deemed significant by the principal, the principal will advise the superintendent.
3. The principal will obtain an estimate of the damage and report it in writing to the superintendent.
4. Upon receiving a report of willful damage, the school district will do any or all of the following:
 - Recover damages from parents/guardians or from the student (in the case of an independent student);
 - File charges if deemed necessary by Administration
5. In the case of damage deemed significant by the principal, the student may be suspended and/or be recommended for long-term suspension.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS ON CAMPUS

Volunteers make a difference and are an integral part of our schools. We welcome and encourage volunteer involvement. There are many ways to assist our schools. Contact a teacher directly, the Learning Center Coordinator, the Principal, or the PTO to find out how to support your school.

As part of our safe school efforts, individuals interested in volunteering in our schools must register using our Online Registration Form prior to performing volunteer services. If you do not have access to a computer with internet, paper forms are also available through the school. In order to protect our students from potential abuse or exploitation, we will also be performing a Vermont criminal record check screening on all individuals interested in volunteering in our schools or recreation department. Additional information can be found at: www.ewsd.org

All volunteers and visitors are expected to abide by all applicable EWSD policies and procedures, federal and state laws and regulations, and other administrative rules while providing service within our schools.

Below is an outline of some of the district safety and confidentiality standards and rules applicable to both volunteers and visitors:

1. Plan your visit in advance by contacting your student's teacher or administra-

- tion so instruction is not disrupted.
2. Please, enter through the main office doors, sign in, and wear a visitor pass while you are in the school or Central Office.
 3. Any information about a student observed during a visit cannot be shared.

Schools frequently host many visitors, parent/guardian volunteers, and helpers during the school year. Individuals visiting, and/or volunteering, in our schools have an obligation to protect the confidentiality of students. This is a protection of the students' civil rights, and we ask visitors to pay special attention to this very important issue. We hope you will find the time to visit our schools and see the exciting, interesting things your student is doing.

Individuals or groups may be denied access to school grounds if the principal or designee determines the individual is acting, or can reasonably be anticipated to act, in a manner which disrupts normal educational functions. Affiliations with the school may include, but are not limited to: students, faculty, other district employees, and vendors. The principal or designee may refuse to allow persons having no legitimate business to enter property under the District's control, and may contact law enforcement to remove unauthorized persons upon their refusal to leave peaceably upon request. Loitering or trespassing on school grounds/school buildings is prohibited.

Guest Students: Students wishing to bring a guest student to school must obtain prior approval from the main office.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

ANIMAL DISSECTION

In compliance with 16 VSA, §912 "Pupil Right to Refusal: Animal Dissection Law," any EWSD student has the right to be excused from participating in any lesson, exercise, or assessment requiring the student to dissect, vivisection, or otherwise harm or destroy an animal or any part of an animal to observe any of these activities, as part of a course or instruction. Any EWSD student and parent/guardian may exercise this right by completing the Opt-Out Form at the school's main office. EWSD schools will provide alternative education methods for those students who choose to opt out of these activities so they may learn and be assessed upon the curriculum material. The Opt-Out Form must be completed within two weeks from the first day of school (or within the first two weeks of enrollment), or the student will be deemed to have opted-in to participation in course requirements.

Alternative Education Method: A student who is excused under this policy shall be provided with alternative methods through which they can learn and be assessed on material required by the course. The alternative methods shall be developed by the teacher of the course, in consultation with the principal if necessary.

Discrimination: No student shall be discriminated against based on their decision to exercise the right to be excused afforded by this policy.

ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT (AHERA)

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires written notice be given to workers and building occupants, or their legal guardians, that all schools have Management Plans for the safe control and maintenance of asbestos-containing materials found in their buildings. These Management Plans are available and accessible to the public at the main office of each school facility. The Property Services Director is the EWSD designated person for AHERA requirements. Currently, no AHERA work is in progress in any EWSD location. This notification is required per 40 CFR §763.93(g)(4).

EQUAL ACCESS AND PUBLIC ACCESS

EWSD and its member districts will not discriminate against any person or group on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), ancestry, national origin, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender identity, marital status, or any other legally protected status under federal or state law. Appropriate measures will be taken within the context of per Vermont's Public Accommodation Act, 9 V.S.A. 4500 et seq., Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guidelines and regulations to insure such compliance.

The board, in compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, affirms:

1. The right of all students to equal treatment (including aid, benefits, services, and application of rules and regulations) without regard to gender.
2. The right of every student to access all courses with regard to gender.
3. That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in Health and Physical Education programs.
4. That no student will be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in athletics, intra-mural, or co-curricular activities.

5. That no student shall be excluded on the basis of gender from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in vocational programs and activities.
6. The rights of all students to equal treatment without regard to marital or parental status.
7. The right of every student to counseling without regard to gender, and with non-discriminatory counseling instruments/materials.

Grievance Procedure: In the event a student, parent/guardian, or employee believes there is a basis for a grievance regarding equal educational opportunities, that person shall follow the procedures outlined below:

- Step 1: The person who believes there is a basis for a grievance regarding equal educational opportunities will present the alleged grievance in writing on a standard form supplied by the EWSD office to the building principal or immediate supervisor within ten (10) workdays following the time when the aggrieved reasonably should have gained knowledge of its occurrence. The principal or immediate supervisor will attempt to resolve the grievance, and will respond within five (5) workdays following receipt of the completed form.
- Step 2: If the action of Step 1 fails to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the affected party, the aggrieved will, within five (5) workdays, submit such grievance in writing to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee will reply in writing within five (5) workdays after the initial presentation of the grievance.
- Step 3: If the action of Step 2 fails to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party, the aggrieved part will, within five (5) workdays after receiving the written reply from the Superintendent or designee, submit such grievance to the member district school board for resolution. The member district school board will review the grievance and hold a hearing, if necessary, within twenty (20) workdays after receipt of the Step 2 response. The member district school board will reply to the grievance in writing within five (5) workdays thereafter, and the decision of the school board will be final. Reprisals taken by the member district school board or any of its members as a result of a grievance decision will be grievable.
- Step 4: The aggrieved party has the right to bypass the grievance procedure and make the complaint directly with federal officials. However, it is suggested the aggrieved parties follow the procedure as outline above. If the aggrieved party follows the grievance procedure and the grievance is not resolved, the

party may then direct their complaint to the Office of Civil Rights or Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Contact information for the EEOC can be found at: www.eeocoffice.com/vermont-eeoc-offices.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) PROGRAM

The Essex Westford School District is committed to supporting the academic and social needs of all English Language Learners (ELL) attending our schools and ensuring that ELL students can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs. An ELL student is a student with a home language other than English and who is limited English language proficient based on results from an English language proficiency assessment approved by the state of Vermont. Historically terms have been used to describe the ELL students, including English as a Second Language (ESL), Limited English Proficiency (LEP), English Learner (EL) and English Language Program (ELP). The Essex Westford School District ELL Program is inclusive of students who fall into all of these categories.

Students are determined to be eligible for ELL Services through a screening and identification process and outlined by specific exit and entry requirements established by the Vermont Agency of Education.

At the time of registration, parents/guardians of each new student will complete the state required VT Primary/ Home Language Survey. If any other language is indicated on the Survey, the ELL teacher assigned to that school is notified and provided with a copy of the survey.

The ELL teacher assigned to the student's school will review the survey, conduct any necessary interview and/or testing, and complete the EWSD Screening Form for English Language Learner (ELL) Student Identification.

If it is determined that this student is an ELL student, the ELL teacher will develop an ELL Student Service Plan which outlines the nature and frequency of ELL services provided to the student that year. The service plan will be revisited throughout the year and may be revised to meet the changing needs of the student. Parents/guardians will receive notification of assessment results and ELL status determination, as well as a copy of the ELL Student Service Plan (if applicable). Parents will be given an opportunity to ask questions or share their concerns.

Based on the screening and identification process, ELL students fall into one of three

categories:

Current ELL — An ELL student who qualified and is receiving services

Monitoring — An ELL student who has passed the ACCESS test must be, per VT regulations, monitored by a qualified ELL teacher for two years prior to fully exiting the program. Students are listed as Monitoring Year 1 (MY1) or Monitoring Year 2 (MY2). During this time, ELL teachers will review student academic records, assessment results and consult with teachers to ensure that the student's academic progress is not being hindered by language proficiency.

Exited — Following two years of monitoring, an ELL students will exit the ELL program.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) NOTICE

Policy C1 Student Records - FERPA affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. EWSD will assume that either parent has the right to inspect, review, and release the student's records unless evidence is provided demonstrating there is a legally binding instrument or court order providing the basis for specifically excluding a parent from such areas.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception permitting disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The school will also release student records without prior consent or autho-

rization under certain other exceptions, including: government officials and authorities as required by law, in health and safety emergencies, in connection with the application and receipt of financial aid, and (if required by state law) to accrediting organizations carrying out their official functions and to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena after having made a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena. Student information is provided to the State of Vermont concerning certain incidences of discipline and student behavior, including: bullying, harassment, physical restraint, suspension, and long-term suspension.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office administering FERPA is Family Policy Compliance Office Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20202-4605.
5. The district has determined that student directory information is not harmful or an invasion of privacy, and therefore will release this information without first obtaining parent consent or prior authorization. The purpose of releasing such information is to enable the district to publish newsletters, yearbooks, directories, and similar publications, and to release information to media outlets concerning student academic and athletic achievements. The following directory information may be released or posted online (via the district website or EWSD social media accounts), or used in district publications, as stated above, without obtaining parental/guardian consent: student's name, parent's/guardian's names, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, grade level, field of study, enrollment status (e.g. full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports including audio-visual or photographic records of the openly visibly activities thereof (e.g. artistic performances, sporting contests, assemblies, service projects, awards ceremonies, etc.), weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, most recent previous school attended and photographs (including video) of regular school activities that do not disclose specific academic information about the student and/or would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy.
6. If a parent/guardian, person acting as a student's parent/guardian, or the student (if 18 or older) does not want the district to release the directory information listed below, they must notify the district in writing within 10 days of receiving this document that they don't want directory information released.

A non-disclosure form is part of each student's Biographical Verification Form (BVD) at the beginning of the school year. If no written request is received in a timely manner, the school will disclose directory information without prior consent. Military recruiters and institutions of higher education are entitled under federal law (NCLB) to a list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of high school students unless parents/guardians object to such release. If you parents/guardians notify the school principal in writing of their wish to not release their student's name, address and telephone number to recruiters and institutions of higher education, the school will honor the request at that time.

7. Lists of student names and other directory information will not be made available except to school-related organizations, such as the PTO, at the discretion of the principal. Lists of such directory information are also provided to military recruiters and institutions of higher education.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS (HQT)

In compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, parents/guardians are entitled to request information about the professional qualifications of their student's teacher for the current school year. The following information may be requested:

- Certification(s)
- College major/graduate certification or degree held by the teacher
- Qualifications of the paraprofessional (if paraprofessional are provided)

Families seeking information of their student's teacher's qualifications should contact the school principal.

HOMELESSNESS

Students and families can become homeless for a number of reasons. The U.S. Department of Education defines homeless youth as youth who "lack a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence" or an "individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a) a supervised or publicly operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill; or c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings."

Students and families experiencing homelessness can find support and have their questions answered by calling 802-878-8168 and speaking to one of the homelessness liaisons in the central office.

Students experiencing homelessness are eligible for free and reduced lunch, academic intervention (if needed) and support with school supplies or other needs associated with school participation.

Students have the ability to maintain enrollment in the school of attendance during their period of homelessness as outlined in federal law. Student can also enroll in the school district where they are staying during their period of homelessness. The homeless liaison will review each case, consider the student's needs, discuss the need for transportation to and from school in order to maintain attendance and school participation.

Homelessness is not a barrier to school attendance and we have supports in place to help students and families who are experiencing this circumstance. We are here to help!

MANDATORY REPORTING

We are committed to the safety and welfare of each student under our care. Under State law and EWSD policy, school personnel are mandatory reporters and are required to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) within 24 hours. School personnel are mandated to report all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to DCF.

Schools work with Child Protection Teams (which include the school nurse, principal, guidance counselor, classroom teacher, and other designated school personnel). These teams meet routinely to review the safety and well-being of students.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The EWSD is committed to providing all of its students, employees, families and visitors with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect and are free from discrimination of any kind. EWSD prohibits the unlawful discrimination of students, employees, families and visitors based on their actual or perceived race, age, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability and any other protected class under federal or Vermont law. EWSD shall uphold the requirements of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation

Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

Applicants for admission, employment, services and facilities are hereby notified that EWSD does not discriminate on the basis of any person's actual or perceived race, age, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability and any other protected category under federal or Vermont law in admission or access to, or treatment of, or employment in, its programs and activities.

The following person has been designated by EWSD to coordinate efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

Paul O'Brian

51 Park Street

Essex Junction, VT 05452

Phone: (802) 857-7038

Fax: (802) 878-1370

PRIVACY RIGHTS AND STUDENT SURVEYS

Surveys and evaluations can be a valuable resource for schools and communities in determining student needs for educational services. Surveys and evaluations are often essential to help schools determine where to focus instruction and resources to better help our students. EWSD schools will notify parents/guardians when a planned survey, analysis or evaluation will be conducted. Parents/guardians have the right to opt their student out of participating in certain surveys, as listed below.

Right to Opt-Out: Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt-out of participation in the administration of any survey which reveals information concerning on or more of the following topics. Additionally, no student shall be required, without parental/guardian consent, to take part in a survey, analysis, or evaluation funded by the U.S. Department of Education that reveals:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of a student or student's parents/guardians
- Mental or psychological problems of a student or student's family
- Sexual behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom student respondents have

- close family relationships
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or members of the clergy
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program for receiving assistance under such program)
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents/guardians

Parents/guardians, or students 18 years or age or older, have the right to “opt-out” of the following activities:

- The collection, disclosure and use of personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information. This does not apply to the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational services for, or to students, such as: college or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment; book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low cost literary products; curriculum and instructional materials used in schools; tests and assessments; student recognition programs; and the sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related activities.
- The administration of surveys that include the subject areas listed above.
- The administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school that is not necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of a student or other students, and otherwise not permitted or required by state law.

Right to Inspection: Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect any survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student. Requests for inspection shall be in writing, and shall be made in sufficient time to allow a response at least two weeks in advance of any survey given. Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. Tests or academic assessments or evaluations are not instructional materials.

RESIDENCY

Under Vermont law, the school a student attends is determined by where parents/guardians reside. At least one parent/guardian must reside in the district in order for their

student(s) to attend school in that district. Verification of residency is required. Misrepresentation of residency is a violation of state law.

Notification is required if residency changes during the school year. Any non-residents are required to pay tuition.

Students and parents who are, or may be experiencing, homelessness should refer to the section on Homelessness in this handbook for assistance and guidance.

EWSD Policy Manual

**The EWSD Board develops and maintains policies followed in all of our schools. This handbook contains information regarding frequently referred to policies. Students and parents/guardians are expected to consult the district's Policy Manual for a comprehensive listing of all district policies, many of which are not included in this handbook. The Policy Manual can be accessed at:
www.ewsd.org**

Essex Westford School Board Member Directory

Name	Title	Email
Martha Heath	Chair	martha.heath@board.ewsd.org
Kim Gleason	Vice-Chair	kim.gleason@board.ewsd.org
Marla Durham	Clerk	marla.durham@board.ewsd.org
Patrick Murray	Member	patrick.murray@board.ewsd.org
Liz Subin	Member	liz.subin@board.ewsd.org
Keeley Schell	Member	keeley.schell@board.ewsd.org
Brendan Kinney	Member	brendan.kinney@board.ewsd.org
Al Bombardier	Member	al.bombardier@board.ewsd.org
Diane Clemens	Member	diane.clemens@board.ewsd.org
Andre Roy	Member	andre.roy@board.ewsd.org

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www.ewsd.org**

2017-2018 Calendar Dates

Essex Westford School District (K-12)

- **Aug. 30 - First day of School**
- **Sept. 4 - No School (Labor Day)**
- **Oct. 16-27 - PreK-5 and Westford Flexible Parent/Guardian Conferences**
- **Oct. 18 - ADL/EMS/EHS Early Release, Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conferences**
- **Oct. 19 - No School, Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conferences**
- **Oct. 20 - No School**
- **Nov. 20 - 24 - No School (Thanksgiving Break)**
- **Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 - No School (Winter Break)**
- **Jan. 15 - No School (Martin Luther King Jr. Observance)**
- **Feb. 26 - March 2 - No School (February Break)**
- **March 23 - No School & Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conferences**
- **April 23 - 27 - No School (Spring Break)**
- **May 28 - No School (Memorial Day)**
- **June 12 - Last Day of School for Students (Tentative)**

Center for Technology, Essex

- **Aug. 30 - First day of School**
- **Sept. 4 - No School (Labor Day)**
- **Oct. 19 - No School**
- **Oct. 20 - No School**
- **Nov. 20 - 24 - No School (Thanksgiving)**
- **Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 - No School (Winter Break)**
- **Jan. 15 - No School (Martin Luther King Jr. Observance)**
- **Feb. 10 - Open House**
- **Feb. 26 - March 2 - No School (February Break)**
- **March 14 - National Technical Honor Society Induction**
- **April 3 - Step Up Day**
- **April 23 - 27 - No School (Spring Vacation)**
- **May 28 - No School (Memorial Day)**
- **June (TBA) - Recognition Night**
- **June 8 - Last Day of School for Students (Tentative)**

School and Building Directory

EWSD Central Office
51 Park Street/58 Founders Road, Essex Jct.
Beth Cobb, Superintendent
Main: 878-8168
Web: www.ewsd.org

Essex Elementary School
1 Bixby Hill Road, Essex Jct.
Peter Farrell, Principal
Main: 878-2584

Hiawatha Elementary School
30 Hiawatha Avenue, Essex Jct.
Katherine Grykien, Principal
Main: 878-1384

Summit Street School
17 Summit Street, Essex Jct.
Suzanne Gruendling, Principal
Main: 878-1377

Founders Memorial School
33 Founders Road, Essex Jct.
Wendy Cobb, Principal
Main: 879-6326

Thomas Fleming School
21 Prospect Street, Essex Jct.
Daniel Ryan, Principal
Main: 878-1381

Albert D. Lawton
104 Maple Street, Essex Jct.
Jennifer Wood, Principal
Main: 878-1388

Essex Middle School
60 Founders Road, Essex Jct.
Kevin Briggs, Principal
Main: 879-7173

Westford School
146 Brookside Rd., Westford
Marcie Lewis, Principal
Main: 878-5932

Essex High School
2 Educational Drive, Essex Jct.
Robert Reardon, Principal
Main: 879-7121

Center for Technology, Essex
2 Ed Drive, Suite 200, Essex Jct.
Robert Travers, Principal
Main: 879-5558

Essex Skating Facility
2 Educational Drive, Essex Jct.
Noel Boutin, Rink Manager
Main: 878-1394
Web: www.essexrink.com

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For more information, visit: www.ewsd.org